

**The Australian Government,
the US alliance, and the
Cuban Missile Crisis:
A history and policy analysis**

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2017

Abstract

In October 1962, the world was brought to the brink of nuclear catastrophe. The Cuban Missile Crisis marked the closest the United States (US) and the Soviet Union came to military conflict that might have led to nuclear annihilation during the Cold War. This thesis investigates the Australian Government's policy response to the crisis. In doing so, it makes an original contribution to Australian Cold War history and to the extensive literature on the crisis.

The Australian Government's policy response to the crisis is examined in the context of the Australia-US alliance. A diplomatic history, this thesis relies heavily on declassified government records from Australian and American archives. Additionally, oral history interview transcripts, audio-visual materials, Hansard, newspapers, and private collections, were consulted in order to reconstruct comprehensively Australia's policy on this matter and the factors that shaped it.

This thesis examines: Australia's awareness of the Cuban situation; the Menzies Government's policy on the crisis, specifically, factors it considered—and did not consider—in formulating its policy; and the Government's immediate implementation of that policy, including the reactions of some sections of the Australian community to that policy. It demonstrates that despite limited advance notice and awareness of the Cuban situation, the Government swiftly declared support for the US in the crisis, specifically, its resolution to be presented to the United Nations Security Council. It

reveals that certain politicians, diplomats, and public servants were concerned about: Australia's obligations under the Australia New Zealand United States Security Treaty; the legality of the US response; the precedent set by the quarantine; the implications of US policy on the crisis regarding Australian nuclear ambitions; Australia maintaining its trade relationship with Cuba; and the repercussions the crisis could have on collective defence arrangements, which Australia relied on for its security. Despite these concerns and challenges, the Government considered the successful management of the US alliance paramount in formulating and implementing its policy on the crisis.

Doctor of Philosophy Declaration

I, Laura Thompson, declare that the PhD thesis entitled “The Australian Government, the US alliance and the Cuban Missile Crisis: A history and policy analysis” is no more than 100,000 words in length including quotes and exclusive of tables, figures, appendices, bibliography, references and footnotes. This thesis contains no material that has been submitted previously, in whole or in part, for the award of any other academic degree or diploma. Except where otherwise indicated, this thesis is my own work.



LAURA THOMPSON

30 August 2017

To Clive, in memoriam

Acknowledgements

Victoria University, Australia (VU), awarded me a scholarship that supported me to undertake my PhD. The National Archives of Australia (NAA) and the Australian Historical Association also awarded me a digitisation scholarship that enabled me to access remotely a number of records held at the NAA, Canberra. I am sincerely grateful for their generous support.

Staff at archives and libraries in Australia and the US provided valuable assistance. I am indebted to: Andrew Cairns of the NAA, Canberra, who facilitated countless declassification requests; Edmund Rutledge of the NAA, Sydney, who knew where to dig for relevant ABC records; David Langbart and Edward Uribe of the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA), College Park, Maryland, who were a wealth of knowledge on NARA and its records; the staff at the JFK Presidential Library and Museum; and Mark Armstrong-Roper and the staff of the VU library. I also wish to thank the individuals who kindly took time to correspond privately with me on my research.

I am especially grateful to my supervisors, Phillip Deery and Allan Patience, as well as Lyndon Burford, Leonardo Campus, Benoît Pelopidas, and those who attended the Wilson Center's Nuclear History Boot Camp 2016, for their insights, suggestions, and constructive feedback, from which this thesis has benefited immensely.

My colleagues at Victoria University, particularly those in office E212, have provided me with incredible support and many laughs throughout my PhD experience. Special thanks goes to Lutfiye Ali, Kara Dadswell, and Rob Kaczan.

Finally, thank you to my grandfather for inspiring my love of history and my family for fostering it. Thank you to Jason Stanley for his support, and to my friends for their encouragement and patience. Thank you to Joshua Egan who, in recent months, has taken care of me so that I could take care of the PhD. Finally, I would like to acknowledge my beautiful dog and study buddy, Clive, the first to hear all of my research ideas.

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Illustrations contained in this thesis have been reproduced with the permission of Fairfax Syndication and the JFK Library:

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| Illustration 3 | John F. Kennedy Library and Museum (JFK Library):
1963-07-08 B, AR, AR8009-B, C, “Luncheon in Honor [<i>sic</i>] of
the Prime Minister of Australia Robert Gordon Menzies,
1:30PM,” 8 July 1963. |
| Illustration 4 | <i>Sydney Morning Herald</i> , 27 October 1962, 2. |
| Illustration 5 | <i>Sydney Morning Herald</i> , 2 November 1962, 2. |
| Illustration 6 | <i>Sydney Morning Herald</i> , 26 October 1962, 2. |

Acronyms and Abbreviations

AAEC	Australian Atomic Energy Commission
ABC	Australian Broadcasting Commission/Corporation
ACT	Australian Capital Territory
AEST	Australian Eastern Standard Time
AFA	Air Force Association
AIB	Allied Intelligence Bureau
ALP	Australian Labor Party
AMA	Australian Medical Association
ANU	Australian National University
ANZ	Archives New Zealand
ANZAM	Australian, New Zealand and Malayan area
ANZUS	Australia New Zealand United States Security Treaty (1951)/ alliance
ASD	Australian Signals Directorate
ASIS	Australian Secret Intelligence Service
AT&T	American Telephone and Telegraph Company
AUST	Australia
AUSTEO	Australian Eyes Only
AWM	Australian War Memorial
BAC	British Aircraft Corporation

BBC	British Broadcasting Corporation
BHP	Broken Hill Propriety Company Limited
CDF	Central Decimal File
CIA	Central Intelligence Agency
COCOM	Coordinating Committee for Multilateral Export Controls
CPD	Commonwealth Parliamentary Debates
CSIRO	Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation
CSR	Colonial Sugar Refining Company
CTBTO	Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organisation
CWIHP	Cold War International History Project
DCGS	Deputy Chief of the General Staff
DFAT	Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade
DMI	Directorate of Military Intelligence
DSB	Defence Signals Branch
EEC	European Economic Community
END	Extended nuclear deterrence
EST	US Eastern Standard Time
ExComm	Executive Committee of the National Security Council
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
GCHQ	Government Communications Headquarters
GMT	Greenwich Mean Time
IAEA	International Atomic Energy Agency

ICBM	Intercontinental ballistic missile
IISS	International Institute for Strategic Studies
ITN	Independent Television News
ITV	Independent Television Network
IRSIG	International Regulations on SIGINT
JFK	John F. Kennedy
JIB	Joint Intelligence Bureau
JIC	Joint Intelligence Committee
KT	Kilo-ton
MRBM	Medium-range ballistic missile
NAA	National Archives of Australia
NARA	National Archives and Records Administration, College Park, Maryland, US
NASA	National Aeronautics and Space Administration
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NFZ	Nuclear-free zone
NLA	National Library of Australia, Canberra
NMA	National Museum of Australia, Canberra
NPT	Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (1968)
NSA	National Security Archive
NSW	New South Wales
NTBT	Nuclear Test Ban Treaty

NTI	Nuclear Threat Initiative
OACSI	Office of the Assistant Chief of Staff for Intelligence
OB	Outside Broadcast
OSS	Office of Strategic Services
PKI	Indonesian communist party
PM	Prime Minister
PRC	People's Republic of China
RAAF	Royal Australian Air Force
RAF	Royal Air Force
RG	Record Group
RSSAILA	Returned Sailors', Soldiers' and Airmen's Imperial League of Australia
SAGW	Surface-to-air guided weapon
SEATO	South East Asia Treaty Organisation
SIA	Secret Intelligence Australia
SIGINT	Signals Intelligence
SIS	Secret Intelligence Service
SLBM	Submarine-launched ballistic missile
SOE	Special Operations Executive
TFX	Tactical Fighter Experimental
TNT	Trinitrotoluene
UK	United Kingdom

UKUSA	United Kingdom-United States Agreement
UN	United Nations
UN Comtrade	United Nations Commodity Trade Statistics Database
US	United States of America/United States
USAAF	United States Army Air Force
USAF	United States Air Force
USD	United States dollars
USIA	United States Information Agency
VOA	Voice of America
WFP	World Food Programme

Note on Publications

Some of the research undertaken for this thesis I published under my *former* name,

Laura Stanley, not Laura Thompson:

Stanley, Laura. "Cuban Missile Crisis special." *ABC Local Radio*. Radio programme presented by Richard Fidler. Broadcasted 15 October 2012. <http://www.abc.net.au/local/stories/2012/10/15/3610878.htm> (accessed 15 October 2012). (The programme was also broadcasted on *ABC Radio National* on 17 October 2012).

—— "Australia's untold reaction to the Cuban Missile Crisis." *The Conversation*, 16 October 2012. <https://theconversation.com/australias-untold-reaction-to-the-cuban-missile-crisis-10104> (accessed 16 October 2012).

—— and Phillip Deery. "The Menzies Government, the American Alliance and the Cuban Missile Crisis." *Australian Journal of Politics and History* 59, no. 2 (2013): 178–195.

—— "Cuban Missile Crisis." *Conversations with Richard Fidler, Volume 2, ABC Local Radio*, 2013. (Compilation of selected Richard Fidler radio interviews which includes Laura Stanley, "Cuban Missile Crisis special").

—— "The Australian Government and the Cuban missile crisis: an antipodean perspective," 217–35. In *An International History of the Cuban Missile Crisis: A 50-year retrospective*. Edited by David Gioe, Len Scott, and Christopher Andrew. Studies in Intelligence Series. Oxon: Routledge, 2014.

Note on Sources

The vast majority of Australian government records cited in this thesis can be found in the declassified files of the Department of External Affairs (now the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT)). Some of these files were already available to the public at the National Archives of Australia (NAA). Requests were lodged to view several files not yet examined and almost all were declassified. The majority of the files relevant to this thesis have the access status “open with exception,” meaning that some folios within these files remain classified. Additionally, requests were lodged regarding files that were already available and declared open with exception in order to ascertain if further folios could be declassified. Despite the classification restrictions on most External Affairs files on the crisis, they are numerous, large, and rich sources.

Obtaining access to Australian intelligence agency files however, proved much more difficult. While several External Affairs files relating to the Joint Intelligence Committee were examined for this thesis, the NAA does not have in its custody files on the crisis created by the Joint Intelligence Bureau, the Defence Signals Branch, and the military intelligence services (Directorate of Military Intelligence, Directorate of Naval Intelligence and Security, and the Directorate of Air Force Intelligence). Requests for such files were lodged by the NAA with the current controlling agencies on my behalf in March 2013 and, at the time of submission of this thesis, remain pending. Furthermore, the John F. Kennedy Presidential Library and Museum, Boston, Massachusetts (JFK Library) applied unsuccessfully on my behalf to have additional

records made available from a partly declassified file regarding a meeting of allied intelligence officials during the crisis. It is worth noting therefore that the intelligence aspects of Australia's experience of the crisis, while addressed in this thesis, remain closely guarded and have been investigated as far as has proved feasible.

Records of the Kennedy Administration and US government cited in this thesis were collected during a field visit to the JFK Library and the National Archives and Records Administration, College Park, Maryland, in late 2012. Copies of New Zealand government records held at Archives New Zealand, Wellington, were generously provided by my colleague, Lyndon Burford. A number of databases containing digitised records of foreign governments, which are cited in the bibliography, were also viewed in the course of research for this thesis.

Unless otherwise stated, the Australian government directories published in December 1962 and June 1964 were used to identify the full names and positions of relevant individuals where such information was not included in government records.¹

The major daily newspapers published in every Australian capital city in 1962 were examined for this thesis; only two were inaccessible to the author: Sydney's *Daily Telegraph* and Perth's *Daily News*. While the Cuban Crisis was reported in regional and

¹ *Directory to the Office of the Governor-General, the Parliament, the Executive Government, the Judiciary, Departments and Authorities* (Canberra: Commonwealth of Australia, December 1962); and *ibid.*, June 1964.

local newspapers, an analysis of their coverage of this event is beyond the scope of this thesis.² The digitisation of newspapers and periodicals has enabled researchers to access, locate, and search relevant sources with ease. However, apart from the *Age*, newspapers printed in 1962 have not yet been digitised.³ Consequently, the newspapers and periodicals that feature in this thesis were located following weeks of intensive and slow searches of microfilm.

² See, for example, “Cuban Blockade By U.S. Ships: Huge Fleet Is Fanning Out Over Atlantic,” *News-Mail* (Bundaberg, Queensland), 24 October 1962, 1; and “Air-Sea Blockade Of Cuba By U.S.: Kennedy Throws Down Gauntlet To Khrushchev: Ships Carrying Arms Will Be Turned Back,” *Kalgoorlie Miner* (Kalgoorlie, Western Australia), 24 October 1962, 1.

³ Newspapers that were mostly printed from 1803-1954 are available on Trove, an information resource managed by the National Library of Australia, Canberra (NLA): NLA, Trove, <http://trove.nla.gov.au> (accessed 5 July 2017). The *Age* is available online: Google Newspaper Archive, <https://news.google.com/newspapers> (accessed 5 July 2017).

Introduction

The early 1960s was a period of “unprecedented tension, turbulence and crisis” in international relations.¹ The Cuban Missile Crisis² of 1962 was one such crisis that could have led to nuclear catastrophe. This thesis examines Australia’s policy response to this defining episode of the Cold War and the twentieth century in the context of the Australia-US alliance. Australia and the Cuban Missile Crisis is a subject that, surprisingly, has been overlooked by historians. This thesis addresses this historiographical gap and in doing so, sheds new light on Australian-American relations and on Australia’s Cold War experience in the early 1960s.

Three main areas of inquiry are addressed in this thesis: when and how Australia learnt about the Cuban Crisis; the Australian Government’s policy on the matter, specifically, how it formulated its policy and factors it did, and did not, consider in its decision-making; and the initial implementation of that policy during the immediate crisis period. The first area of inquiry, which deals with Australia’s awareness of the crisis, is studied in Chapter 1. This chapter explores when and how Australian intelligence officials were alerted to the crisis. A historical background on intelligence cooperation between Australia and the US provides the necessary context for how the Australian intelligence community obtained information on the Cuban situation. Also, it examines when and

¹ Gordon Greenwood, “Australian Foreign Policy in Action,” in *Australia in World Affairs, 1961–1965*, eds. Gordon Greenwood and Norman Harper (Melbourne: F.W. Cheshire for the Australian Institute of International Affairs, 1968), 1.

² “Cuban Missile Crisis” is the name typically given to this event by Western scholars, who have produced the majority of the literature on this subject. While this term appears throughout this thesis given its use in the literature, the term “Cuban Crisis” is employed more frequently in this thesis as it was the term used by the Australian Government at the time. In the former Soviet Union, the episode is known as the “Caribbean Crisis,” and in Cuba, the “October Crisis.”

how key Australian diplomats, public servants, the Prime Minister, and the wider Australian public were informed of the crisis. It also looks at initial Australian television, radio, and newspaper reporting on the crisis, including US President, John F. Kennedy's address to the American people, which was relayed around the world. It concludes with an examination of the first Australian parliamentary statements on the crisis.

The second area of inquiry regarding the Australian Government's policy on the crisis, which deals with policy formulation and considerations, is the largest section of the thesis comprising four chapters. Chapter 2 examines the Cabinet's deliberation on the matter, and the policy it subsequently formulated. It also looks at the role of Australian Prime Minister, R.G. Menzies, in Cabinet and how Cabinet's deliberation on the crisis has been discussed and interpreted by government officials. Further, it briefly examines Garfield Barwick's tenure as Minister for External Affairs and his relationship with his Department, given they took responsibility for, and managed, Australia's response to the Cuban Crisis. Chapters 3 to 5 critically analyse three factors (each in turn) relevant to the Government's policy on the crisis: Australian nuclear ambitions; Australia's treaty obligations, for example, to the United States (US) under the Australia New Zealand United States Security Treaty of 1951 (ANZUS), and the legality of US actions towards Cuba; and Australia-Cuba trade and its effect on Australia-US relations. These chapters provide significant insight into the context in which the Menzies Government determined its policy on the crisis, and factors that did and did not influence its decision-making. They reveal how the Government perceived the nuclear threat posed

by the crisis and who it considered responsible for the crisis and its resolution. Most importantly, Chapters 2 to 5 highlight Australia's geo-strategic and geo-economic interests, specifically, the significance of the US alliance in Australian foreign policy-making, and how the Government proposed best to manage the alliance and its interests during the crisis.

The third and final area of inquiry, which is dealt with in Chapter 6, focuses on the Menzies Government's initial implementation of its policy during the crisis. This chapter places Australia's policy in the context of domestic matters. It looks at the relationship between the crisis, Australia's policy on the matter, and the Government's launch of its new three-year defence programme. It also compares the Government's perception of the nuclear threat posed by the crisis with the views of other Australians, including Australian officials located at the UN in New York. This chapter explores Australia's implementation of its policy at the UN during the most intense period of the crisis. In doing so, it highlights the various attitudes Australian officials held regarding the UN. The thesis concludes with a summary of the research findings and a discussion of avenues for further study, despite the extensive literature published on the Cuban Missile Crisis.

The Cuban Missile Crisis has interested historians, political scientists, and sociologists internationally since that fateful October in 1962. Scholars have generated an abundance of literature too voluminous to cite or review here in detail. In the 25 years

after the crisis, scholars studied it predominantly through an American lens. However, from 1987, the crisis was examined from Soviet and Cuban viewpoints following the opening of Moscow archives and the critical oral history conferences organised by James G. Blight and Janet M. Lang (who spells her first name with a lower case j). Historian James G. Hershberg referred to these respective phases as the “first wave” and “second wave” of missile crisis scholarship.³ This study benefits significantly from the extensive literature on the crisis because it provides the context for Australia’s response. Some of the most notable studies of the last four decades have been undertaken by Graham Allison and Philip Zelikow; Aleksandr Fursenko and Timothy Naftali; Jutta Weldes; James G. Blight, Bruce J. Allyn, David A. Welch, David Lewis, and Philip Brenner; Sergo Mikoyan and Svetlana Savranskaya; and Sheldon Stern.⁴ Of more recent studies, Michael Dobbs’ *One Minute to Midnight* is noteworthy as an original, minute-by-minute analysis of the most intense thirteen-day period of the crisis: 16 to 28 October 1962.⁵ Dobbs drew on American, Soviet and Cuban archival records and testimonies to explore the finer details of the occurrences that make up the crisis, which historians have tended to gloss over. He also exposed some of its myths that others have

³ James G. Hershberg, “The Global Cuban Missile Crisis—Surfing the Third Wave of Missile Crisis Scholarship,” in “The Global Cuban Missile Crisis at 50: New Evidence From Behind the Iron, Bamboo, and Sugarcane Curtains, and Beyond,” ed. James G. Hershberg et al., *Cold War International History Project Bulletin* (published in cooperation with the National Security Archive), Issue 17/18 (2012), 7.

⁴ Graham T. Allison, *Essence of Decision: Explaining the Cuban Missile Crisis* (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1971), which was revised with co-author Philip Zelikow in 1999: Graham Allison and Philip Zelikow, *Essence of Decision: Explaining the Cuban Missile Crisis*, 2nd edn. (New York: Longman, 1999); James G. Blight, Bruce J. Allyn, and David A. Welch, with the assistance of David Lewis, *Cuba on the Brink: Castro, the Missile Crisis, and the Soviet Collapse* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1993); Aleksandr Fursenko and Timothy Naftali, “One Hell of a Gamble”: *Khrushchev, Castro, and Kennedy, 1958–1964. The Secret History of the Cuban Missile Crisis* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1997); Jutta Weldes, *Constructing National Interests: The United States and the Cuban Missile Crisis*, vol. 12 Borderlines Series (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1999); James G. Blight and Philip Brenner, *Sad and Luminous Days: Cuba’s Struggle with the Superpowers after the Missile Crisis* (Lanham, Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2002); Sergo Mikoyan, *The Soviet Cuban Missile Crisis: Castro, Mikoyan, Kennedy, Khrushchev, and the Missiles of November*, Svetlana Savranskaya, ed. (Palo Alto, California: Stanford University Press, 2012); and Sheldon M. Stern, *The Cuban Missile Crisis in American Memory: Myths versus Reality* (Palo Alto, California: Stanford University Press, 2012).

⁵ Michael Dobbs, *One Minute to Midnight: Kennedy, Khrushchev, and Castro on the Brink of Nuclear War* (New York: Arrow, 2009).

simply repeated in their assessments. Dobbs therefore provided new insights on the crisis, including, for example, on the reconnaissance flights, positioning of American ships during the quarantine, and storage location of nuclear warheads, which are absent in the earlier literature. The ability to compare Australia's experience with, for example, what the US knew about the crisis and when it knew it, and its diplomatic engagement with other states during the crisis, is most helpful in researching Australia's response, and subsequently, its relations with the US at this time.

Some of the key primary sources located by Dobbs were published online by the National Security Archive (NSA) in 2008.⁶ The NSA, an independent, non-government research institute and library located at The George Washington University, Washington, D.C., collects and publishes declassified documents acquired through the Freedom of Information Act. It manages a Cuba Documentation Project, which contains over 15,000 declassified documents on the crisis on microfiche.⁷ Cuban Missile Crisis documents are also readily accessible to scholars courtesy of the Cold War International History Project (CWIHP). The CWIHP is part of the History and Public Policy Program at the Wilson Center, the official memorial to US president Woodrow Wilson and non-partisan policy forum for addressing global issues through independent research and open dialogue. The research focus of the program is on non-US perspectives of contemporary history. The CWIHP maintains an excellent digital archive on the crisis, which currently

⁶ "One Minute To Midnight: Kennedy, Khrushchev and Castro on the Brink of Nuclear War by Michael Dobbs," The National Security Archive, 4 June 2008, http://nsarchive.gwu.edu/nsa/cuba_mis_cri/dobbs/gitmo.htm (accessed 7 January 2016).

⁷ "Cuba Documentation Project," The National Security Archive, http://nsarchive.gwu.edu/latin_america/cuba.htm (accessed 7 January 2016).

contains 579 documents from around world.⁸ Indispensable for scholars of the crisis are the Archive's electronic briefing books and the CWIHP's bulletins through which they disseminate recently declassified and digitised documents relating to the crisis. Both organisations can be relied on to provide original and fascinating new sources, emphasising that there is still much to glean from this Cold War episode despite its extensive literature. A history of Australia's experience of the crisis makes an important and timely contribution to what continues to be a topic of intense historical interest.

It is necessary to note that this thesis does not deal with the intricacies of the Cuban Missiles Crisis as it played out in Washington, Moscow, and Havana, nor does it provide a detailed analysis of the actions taken by the US, the Soviet Union or Cuba. Furthermore, it does not provide a detailed analysis of how the latter part of the most intense period of the crisis was experienced in Australia nor the lessons that Australia drew on the crisis. Such topics, while worthy of future study, are beyond the scope of this thesis. In providing a history and analysis of the Menzies Government's policy on the crisis, which was swiftly formulated and declared, this thesis concentrates on the early, intense days of the crisis in which the Government determined and implemented its policy.

Histories of how several other states and regions experienced, and responded to, the Cuban Missile Crisis have been published in English: Brazil, Britain, Canada, China,

⁸ "Cuban Missile Crisis," Digital Archive: International History Declassified, Cold War International History Project, Wilson Center, <http://digitalarchive.wilsoncenter.org/collection/31/cuban-missile-crisis> (accessed 8 January 2016).

France, Italy, Latin America, and Turkey.⁹ The leading study on the British response—and of any state indirectly involved in the crisis—is Len Scott’s *Macmillan, Kennedy and the Cuban Missile Crisis: Political, Military and Intelligence Aspects*, which is an insightful and comprehensive analysis of British foreign policy. As underscored by its sub-title, Scott’s in-depth investigation focused on the political, military and intelligence facets of the British Government’s management of the crisis. He examined the Government’s attitude towards Cuba under the leadership of Fidel Castro; British government and opposition views on American-Cuban relations in this period; the roles of individuals and their influence on British foreign policy development, including the “special relationship” between the United Kingdom (UK) and the US; and British popular reactions to the crisis.¹⁰ In addition to its findings, Scott’s study is a helpful model for this thesis; both are diplomatic histories and state case studies on the crisis.

⁹ For the Brazilian response to the crisis, see: James G. Hershberg, “The United States, Brazil, and the Cuban Missile Crisis, 1962,” pts. 1 and 2, *Journal of Cold War Studies* 6, no. 2 (2004): 3–20, and 6, no. 3 (2004): 5–67. For the British response, see: L. V. Scott, *Macmillan, Kennedy and the Cuban Missile Crisis: Political, Military and Intelligence Aspects* (Hampshire: Macmillan Press, 1999); and Jim Wilson, *Launch Pad UK: Britain and the Cuban Missile Crisis* (United Kingdom: Pen and Sword Books, 2008). For the Canadian response, see for example: Jocelyn Maynard Ghent, “Canada, the United States, and the Cuban Missile Crisis,” *Pacific Historical Review* 48, no. 2 (1979): 159–84; Peter T. Haydon, *The 1962 Cuban Missile Crisis: Canadian Involvement Reconsidered* (Toronto: The Canadian Institute of Strategic Studies, 1993); and Asa McKercher, “A ‘Half-hearted Response’?: Canada and the Cuban Missile Crisis, 1962,” *International History Review* 33 (2011): 335–52. For the study on China, see Enrico Maria Fardella, “Mao Zedong and the 1962 Cuban Missile Crisis,” *Cold War History* 15, no. 1 (2015): 73–88. On the French response (in English), see “Cuban Missile Crisis: Charles de Gaulle,” Harvard Kennedy School, Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs, <http://www.cubanmissilecrisis.org/lessons-policy-makers/charles-de-gaulle/> (accessed 6 July 2017). For Italian reactions to the crisis, see Leonardo Campus, “Italian political reactions to the Cuban missile crisis,” in *An International History of the Cuban Missile Crisis: A 50-year retrospective*, David Gioe, Len Scott, and Christopher Andrew, eds., Studies In Intelligence Series (Oxon: Routledge, 2014), 236–57. For the study on Latin America and the crisis, see Renata Keller, “The Latin American Missile Crisis,” *Diplomatic History* 39, no. 2 (2015): 195–222. For the Turkish response, see: Süleyman Seydi, “Turkish-American Relations and the Cuban Missile Crisis, 1957–63,” *Middle Eastern Studies* 46, no. 3 (2010): 433–55. Numerous histories on how several states and regions experienced, and responded to, the crisis have been published in languages other than English. For example, there are book-length studies on Europe and the crisis (in French), see Maurice Vaisse, ed., *L’Europe et la crise de Cuba* (Paris: Armand Colin, 1993), and Italy and the crisis (in Italian), see Leonardo Campus, *I Sei Giorni che Sconvolsero il Mondo: La crisi dei missili di Cuba e le sue percezioni internazionali* (Firenze, Italy: Le Monnier, 2014).

¹⁰ Scott, *Macmillan, Kennedy and the Cuban Missile Crisis*.

Hershberg labelled these histories on the crisis experiences of states other than the superpowers or Cuba as the “third wave” of scholarship on the crisis. It is within this category of the historiography that this thesis can be located. This third wave is, in part, a result of historians’ efforts to *decentralise* the crisis by investigating perspectives other than those held in Washington and Moscow. It is also partly a consequence of more archives opening their doors to researchers.¹¹ The outcome is that scholars, rather than documenting the event as simply a showdown between the two superpowers, are beginning to write about it as the *global* nuclear crisis that it indeed was. However, how to explain an international crisis comprehensively remains an important question beyond the issue of access to primary sources, and subsequently, their interpretation. As Michael H. Hunt observed,

A crisis unfolds in many layers, drawing leaders and their agents in different countries into shifting relationships. An international history that asks us to interpret a crisis in terms of its multiple participants compounds the problem of extracting a stable meaning out of a highly dynamic and interactive process. Only when all the parties involved are combined to achieve a rounded picture are these difficulties most fully apparent.¹²

Despite these challenges, it will only be possible to understand and evaluate better the Cuban Crisis, as well as other international crises, with fuller accounts on the part of all the participants. The Cold War International History Project’s release in 2012 of an 800-page bulletin containing never-before published, non-US primary sources, including translated archival records from more than 20 states “behind the iron, bamboo, and sugarcane curtains, and beyond,” makes a new and substantial contribution to the growing international history of the crisis, and is indicative of the progress regarding

¹¹ Hershberg, “The Global Cuban Missile Crisis,” 7.

¹² Michael H. Hunt, *Crises in U.S. Foreign Policy: An International History Reader* (New Haven, US: Yale University Press, 1996), 422.

decentralisation and accessibility.¹³ Although this bulletin is mainly concerned with communist sources, and to some extent, those from the so-called neutral states, much remains unknown about the experiences of US allies during the crisis. However, Australia, along with some other non-US English language archives, was intentionally excluded from the bulletin “[f]or space reasons and to underline this publication’s value to a field still dominated by Americans.”¹⁴ While the decision of the editors is understandable on the ground of accessibility, the rich and plentiful archival evidence available on Australia and the crisis has been under-utilised, and no scholar, other than the present author, has produced dedicated studies on the subject. This thesis therefore makes a major contribution to the historiography of the Cuban Missile Crisis. Given that the topic has been overlooked by most scholars, it is perhaps unsurprising then that references to Australia and the crisis in the relevant existing literature—books, journal articles and biographical works—are sparse, scattered and superficial.

Prue Torney-Parlicki is the only scholar to have discussed Australia’s response to the crisis. However, the crisis was not her focus. Torney-Parlicki’s article, “Lies, Diplomacy and the ABC: Revisiting ‘the Russo affair’,” and her biography of the journalist, Peter Russo, *Behind the News*, examine the Australian Government’s reaction to what it considered were inflammatory comments made by Russo of the Australian Broadcasting Commission (ABC) on 29 October 1962. Russo remarked on the manner in which the

¹³ James G. Hershberg and Christian F. Ostermann, eds., “The Global Cuban Missile Crisis at 50: New Evidence From Behind the Iron, Bamboo, and Sugarcane Curtains, and Beyond,” Cold War International History Project Bulletin (published in cooperation with the National Security Archive), Issue 17/18 (2012). The bulletin includes new evidence on the crisis from: Brazil, Bulgaria, Chile, China, Cuba, Czechoslovakia, Denmark, France, Germany (East and West), Hungary, Israel, Italy, Japan, Mexico, Mongolia, the Netherlands, Poland, Romania, Russia, Switzerland, North Vietnam and Yugoslavia.

¹⁴ Evidence from Canada, India, the United Kingdom (UK), and the United Nations (UN), was also excluded from the bulletin: *ibid.*, n. 6, 10.

Americans and Soviets handled the crisis and the swiftness with which Australia declared its support for America's actions.¹⁵ Through "the Russo affair" case study, Torney-Parlicki provided useful insight into Australia's response to the crisis and, importantly, she positioned this response in the context of Australian-American relations. In doing so, Torney-Parlicki revealed the sensitivity of the Australian Government to alleged anti-American opinion, and its attempts to silence it. This thesis examines the basis for and extent of the Government's approach towards the US alliance in order to provide a deeper and more nuanced understanding of Australian-American relations in this period.

The 1963 Australian short film, *It Droppeth as the Gentle Rain*, also faced censorship. The film, which was co-directed by Albie Thoms and Bruce Beresford, marked the beginning of experimental structuralist film in Australia, and starred subsequently prominent Australians, including Germaine Greer. But its importance to this thesis, however, is its subject matter. The banned film was described as "an artistic response to the politicization of the Cuban Missile Crisis ... [that] represents an alternate history of what nearly did happen." It was commonly known as "the 'shit' film" for the metaphorical portrayal of excrement as fallout following nuclear war; the use of falling mud on black and white film was an effective depiction. This representation, use of the word "shit", and other references that were allegedly blasphemous, are the reasons Fiona Hooten claimed the censors deemed it offensive. A satire on the media, religion,

¹⁵ See Prue Torney-Parlicki, "Lies, Diplomacy and the ABC: Revisiting 'the Russo affair'," *Overland* 176 (2004): 45–50, which is an examination of occasions when the ABC has defended itself against claims it facilitated anti-American sentiment; and Prue Torney-Parlicki, *Behind the News: A Biography of Peter Russo* (Crawley, Western Australia: University of Western Australia Press, 2005), 281–91, where this affair, and thus the crisis, is explored in the context of Russo's life.

and global events,¹⁶ it is an interesting example of how some in the Australian arts community perceived the crisis. While this study forms part of the sparse literature relating to Australia and the Cuban Crisis, it is not relevant to the Australian Government's formulation and implementation of its policy on the crisis, and it is therefore not investigated further in this thesis.

Gordon Greenwood made reference to Australia and the crisis in *Australia in World Affairs: 1961–1965*. However, his reference relates to Australia's relationship with the United Nations (UN) in this period. Greenwood included some brief reflections of Australian Government and Opposition parliamentarians on the UN with regards to the crisis.¹⁷ Whilst these references are of little assistance in determining Australia's response to the Cuban Crisis, they prove helpful in comprehending it. This thesis, therefore, considers Australian views on the role and influence of the UN during the crisis.

Members of Parliament and representatives of the diplomatic corps in October 1962 made few references to the crisis in biographical or other works. Those who have commented on the crisis in their memoirs, having mainly referred to President Kennedy's handling of it, include Prime Minister Menzies; Australian Labor Party (ALP) backbencher, Leslie Haylen; Australian Ambassador to the US, Howard Beale;

¹⁶ Fiona Hooton, "It Droppeth as the Gentle Rain: The Birth of Australian Experimental Film," *Metro Magazine* (Melbourne) 159 (2008): 138–41.

¹⁷ Greenwood and Harper, *Australia in World Affairs*, 50–1.

and Liberal Party backbencher, Malcolm Fraser.¹⁸ Biographers of Fraser have ruminated on his parliamentary speeches on 5 March and 13 August 1964 when he articulated the precedents set by the crisis and their implications for Australia and Southeast Asia, particularly Vietnam.¹⁹ Fraser also reflected on the crisis in The Daniel Mannix Memorial Lecture he delivered at the University of Melbourne in 1987, where he recalled hearing Menzies talk about the supposedly-confidential Cabinet discussions on how Australia should respond to the situation in Cuba. Fraser claimed to have been told that after much debate among Cabinet members, Menzies declared that it was in Australia's interest to support its American ally; this was, Menzies believed, the only course of action Australia could have taken.²⁰ Although he was not a politician of this period, Alexander Downer, Australian foreign affairs minister in the Howard Government, in a speech concerning nuclear proliferation, recalled the anxiety he felt as a young boy during the crisis.²¹ These works have generally proffered interesting, yet ephemeral, reflections on the crisis and the importance of this event to the Cold War. However, apart from Fraser's views shared in The Daniel Mannix Memorial Lecture, no substantial insight regarding Australia's policy response can be found in these works. While they are helpful in identifying the attitudes and beliefs, even in hindsight, of

¹⁸ R. G. Menzies, *Afternoon Light: Some Memories of Men and Events* (Melbourne: Cassell Australia Ltd, 1967), 145; Leslie Haylen, *Twenty Years' Hard Labor* (South Melbourne: Macmillan of Australia, 1969), 173; Howard Beale, *This Inch of Time: Memoirs of Politics and Diplomacy* (Carlton, Victoria: Melbourne University Press, 1977), 184–5; and Malcolm Fraser and Margaret Simons, *Malcolm Fraser: The Political Memoirs* (Carlton, Victoria: The Miegunyah Press, 2010), 128, which is part-memoir and part authorised biography.

¹⁹ Alan Renouf, *Malcolm Fraser & Australian Foreign Policy* (Sydney: Australian Professional Publications, 1986), 41–2; and Philip Ayres, *Malcolm Fraser: A Biography* (Richmond, Victoria: William Heinemann Australia, 1987), 92–5 and 174–5.

²⁰ Malcolm Fraser, "The Daniel Mannix Memorial Lecture—Sir Robert Menzies: In Search of Balance," lecture delivered at Wilson Hall, University of Melbourne, 30 July 1987, transcript, <http://www.unimelb.edu.au/malcolmfraser/speeches/nonparliamentary/mannixmenzies.html> (accessed 5 April 2010).

²¹ Alexander Downer, "The spread of nuclear, chemical and biological weapons: the sum of all our fears" (speech delivered at Sydney Institute, 17 February 2003). Published in *Sydney Papers* 15, no. 1 (2003): 30–8.

certain politicians and diplomats, in the absence of a framework within which to place such reflections, their value—both inherent and to this thesis—remains limited. For the first time, this thesis provides a framework for such reflections.

In studies on Australia in the 1960s, there are fleeting references to the crisis as an event that simply occurred that decade.²² While these studies provide a picture of other key events of this period, they are general in nature and provide no more than a timeline. Studies of Australia's Cold War are of no further assistance regarding the crisis. Scholars have been assiduous in their examinations of Australia in the immediate post-war period and up to the late 1950s. However, the extensive literature on this period has subsequently implied that Australia's Cold War concluded with this decade.²³ As a result, the crisis and other events of the early 1960s have been overlooked in terms of Australian Cold War historiography. In their two-volume history on Australia's Cold War published in 1984, editors Ann Curthoys and John Merritt narrowed the focus of their study to what they described as, "those briefer periods when a real war appeared likely."²⁴ In terms of their study, this was the period 1945–1959, although they also noted that the same could be said of the years 1979–1984. This is an extraordinary justification for the focus of their study given that in the 1960s—particularly during the crisis—the world faced the very strong possibility of nuclear war. It is also a prime

²² See, for example: *Australia in the 1960s* (Adelaide: Rigby, 1980); Robin Gerster and Jan Bassett, *Seizures of Youth: The Sixties and Australia* (Melbourne: Hyland House, 1991); and Jacqueline Kent, *In the Half Light: Reminiscences of growing up in Australia, 1900–1970* (Sydney: Doubleday, 1991).

²³ See, for example, David Lowe, *Menzies and the 'Great World Struggle': Australia's Cold War, 1948–1954* (Sydney: University of New South Wales Press, 1999), which includes an excellent review of the historiography on Australia's Cold War in the introduction; L.J. Louis, *Menzies' Cold War: a reinterpretation* (Carlton, Victoria: Red Rag Publications, 2001); and Peter Love and Paul Strangio, *Arguing the Cold War* (Carlton, Victoria: Red Rag Publications, 2001).

²⁴ Ann Curthoys and John Merritt, eds., *Australia's First Cold War, 1945–1953*, Vol. 1: Society, communism and culture (Sydney: George Allen & Unwin, 1984), xii.

example of the limited historiographical attention and interest that has been paid to Australia's Cold War of the early 1960s. Nonetheless, this scholarship provides a useful background on the people, politics, and issues facing Australia in the decade or so before the crisis, which in turn, helps place Australia's policy response in context.

While there is still a good deal to learn about Australia's Cold War, much is known about Australia's role in some international affairs up to and during the early 1960s through extensive studies undertaken on Australian foreign and defence policies including on the ANZUS Treaty—and the Australia-US alliance.²⁵ Although these studies neglect to examine Australia's response to the crisis, the literature reveals that Australian governments were obsessed with countering the communist menace at home and abroad. As such, the first half of Australia's Cold War saw sustained military involvement in Southeast Asia, notably the wars in Korea (1950–53) and Vietnam (1962–75), and smaller-scale conflicts of the military and diplomatic kind over issues

²⁵ For studies on Australian-American relations, ANZUS, and Australian foreign and defence policies during the Cold War, specifically in this period, see for example: Alan Watt, *The Evolution of Australian Foreign Policy, 1938–1965* (London: Cambridge University Press, 1967); Greenwood and Harper, *Australia in World Affairs*; T.B. Millar, *Australia's Foreign Policy* (Sydney: Angus and Robertson, 1968), chap. 5; Trevor R. Reese, *Australia, New Zealand, and the United States: A Survey of International Relations 1941–1968* (London: Oxford University Press, 1969); H. G. Gelber, ed., *Problems of Australian Defence* (Melbourne: Oxford University Press, 1970); John Hammond Moore, ed., *The American Alliance: Australia, New Zealand and the United States 1940–1970* (North Melbourne: Cassell Australia, 1970), chap. 4; Joseph A. Camilleri, *Australian-American Relations: The Web of Dependence* (South Melbourne: Macmillan, 1980), chap. 1; Glen St J. Barclay, *Friends in High Places: Australian-American Diplomatic Relations Since 1945* (Melbourne: Oxford University Press, 1985), chap. 6; Joseph A. Camilleri, *ANZUS: Australia's Predicament in the Nuclear Age* (South Melbourne: Macmillan, 1987), chap. 1–3; Norman Harper, *A Great and Powerful Friend: A Study of Australian American Relations Between 1900 and 1975* (St Lucia, Queensland: University of Queensland Press, 1987), part 4; Gregory Pemberton, *All the Way: Australia's road to Vietnam* (Sydney: Allen & Unwin, 1987), chap. 1–5; Glen St J. Barclay, *A Very Small Insurance Policy: The Politics of Australian Involvement in Vietnam, 1954–1967* (St Lucia, Queensland: University of Queensland Press, 1988), 14–36; Coral Bell, *Dependent Ally: A Study in Australian Foreign Policy* (Melbourne: Oxford University Press, 1988), 44–86; Peter G. Edwards with Gregory Pemberton, *Crises and Commitments: The Politics and Diplomacy of Australia's Involvement in Southeast Asian Conflicts 1948–1965*, The Official History of Australia's Involvement in Southeast Asian Conflicts 1948–1975 (Sydney: Allen & Unwin in association with the Australian War Memorial, 1992); Philip Bell and Roger Bell, *Implicated: The United States in Australia*, Australian Retrospectives (Melbourne: Oxford University Press, 1993); and Peter G. Edwards, *A Nation at War: Australian Politics, Society and Diplomacy during the Vietnam War 1965–1975*, The Official History of Australia's Involvement in Southeast Asian Conflicts 1948–1975 (St Leonards, New South Wales (NSW): Allen & Unwin, 1997), 20–4.

involving Malaysia, Borneo, West New Guinea, Thailand, Laos, and Indonesia. Australian foreign and defence policies therefore strongly focused on regional issues, especially the regional threat of communism, and these engagements dominate the scholarship on Australia's involvement in international affairs in the early 1960s.

Cuba receives a passing mention in texts on Australian foreign policy during the Cold War, but little of substance regarding policy-making, relations, or the Cuban Crisis can be gleaned.²⁶ Furthermore, no literature has been located on Australia's relations with Cuba in the 1950s and early 1960s. Australian foreign policy studies that refer to Cuba, do so under the umbrella of the Caribbean, and only briefly examine relations between the two states in the post-Cold War period.²⁷

Scholars have noted that Australian foreign and defence policy increasingly looked to the US in this period. Although British foreign policy was kept in close view, the US alliance took precedence. The US was the ally on which Australia depended should its geo-strategic interests be threatened, and this was reflected in both the ANZUS Treaty and Australian foreign and defence policies. As such, the successful management of the US alliance was seen to be in Australia's national interest. Some scholars have characterised the nature of Australia's role in this relationship as being one of servitude

²⁶ See, for example: J. A. Camilleri, *An introduction to Australian foreign policy*, 4th edn. (Milton, Queensland: The Jacaranda Press, 1979), 108, and 128–9; and Claire Clark, ed., *Australian Foreign Policy: Towards a Reassessment* (North Melbourne: Cassell Australia, 1973), 86 and 140.

²⁷ See, for example, Gareth Evans and Bruce Grant, *Australia's Foreign Relations: In the World of the 1990s* (Carlton, Victoria: Melbourne University Press, 1991), 312.

or compliance.²⁸ David McLean has challenged these interpretations that dominate the literature on Australian-American relations however, having claimed that these conclusions, “have often perpetuated, not transcended, the misunderstandings which characterized the cold war itself.” McLean argued that “the most serious consequence has been a blurring of the extent to which Australia maintained a sense of its own interests.”²⁹ While Australian policymaking in this period hinged on the US alliance, it was not due to American pressure or a desire to meet American expectations, but a result of Australia’s recognition of its own national interest. This thesis examines the extent to which parallels can be drawn with McLean’s conclusions regarding Australia’s policy response to the crisis.

It is worth noting here that in addressing events of the 1960s, most of the scholarship—especially that on Australian foreign and defence policies—represents an *assessment* of these policies. Scholars have made recommendations for future policy-making and provided cost-benefit analyses of the Australia-US alliance for the purposes of evaluating, for example, whether Australia should continue to invest in its alliance with the US. This is not a criticism of this scholarship. These studies assist with situating this thesis in the context of domestic and international affairs confronting Australia, and the state of the Australia-US alliance at this time. This observation is made, however, to illustrate the need to locate these diplomatic and political assessments in a *historical*

²⁸ For an excellent historiographical review of Australian-American relations during the Cold War, see David McLean, “Australia in the Cold War: A Historiographical Review,” *The International History Review* 23, no. 2 (2001): 299–321.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, 320.

context; one that can paint a more complete picture of Australia's Cold War in the early 1960s.

This study of Australia's response to the Cuban Missile Crisis—first and foremost—rectifies an historiographical gap in Australia's Cold War. Through examination of this Cold War episode, this thesis provides new insight on the Cuban Missile Crisis, and importantly, enhances our understanding of, the Australia-US alliance. It examines the influences that shaped Australian foreign and defence policies—both on the crisis and in the early 1960s—and specifically, illuminates why the successful management of Australian-American relations was an imperative component of these policies, and more broadly, in Australia's perceived national interest.

Australians Learn of the Crisis

The eminent Twentieth Century British diplomat, Alexander Cadogan, once described secret intelligence as “the missing dimension [...] of most diplomatic history.”¹ According to Christopher Andrew and David Dilks, “most political and much military history” ignores or underplays intelligence. Citing numerous examples, they rightly stated: “The great danger of any missing historical dimension is that its absence may distort our understanding of other, accessible dimensions.” And as such, historians of national or international politics, they declared, “can never afford to ignore it.”² Intelligence is a critical aspect of the Cuban Missile Crisis. For the US—and subsequently Australia—the crisis commenced in October 1962 when the US discovered that the Soviet Union had installed nuclear-capable missiles in Cuba; intelligence that was obtained from photographs taken by its U2 spy planes on reconnaissance missions over the island. It is for these reasons that this history and policy analysis of Australia and the Cuban Crisis examines the Australian intelligence community’s experience, specifically, when and how some intelligence officials became aware of the crisis. This chapter demonstrates the closeness of the Australian-American alliance on intelligence cooperation—an important feature of the relationship either overlooked or underemphasised by scholars. This is where the story, and this chapter, begins.

¹ Alexander Cadogan, *The Diaries of Sir Alexander Cadogan O.M. 1938-1945*, David Dilks, ed. (London: Cassell, 1971), 21, cited in Christopher Andrew and David Dilks, eds., *The Missing Dimension: Governments and Intelligence Communities in the Twentieth Century* (Great Britain: Macmillan, 1984), 1.

² Andrew and Dilks, *The Missing Dimension*, 1–2.

This chapter also examines when and how other Australians learnt of the Cuban Crisis. It studies information sharing at the diplomatic level to initial public broadcasts regarding the Cuban situation, which were delivered on television, radio, and in print. It demonstrates that Prime Minister Robert Menzies, senior government ministers, key diplomats and public servants, and the Australian public—depending on where one was located—had different, but nonetheless, limited, awareness of the crisis. Additionally, this chapter challenges Prue Torney-Parlicki's assertion that the Government had significant advance notice of the crisis and instead, illustrates that the Government had little warning compared to its allies. It concludes with the Menzies Government's first, and swift, parliamentary statement on the matter—its declaration of its policy on the crisis that placed Australia behind the US.

Origins of Australian-American Intelligence Cooperation

A strong relationship with the US has been a critical and continuing consideration in Australian foreign and defence policy. Australian governments have carefully managed and maintained the US alliance since the arrival of the Great White Fleet in 1908 to defence cooperation in conflicts in Southeast Asia and the Middle East, including the stationing of American marines in Darwin in 2012. Intelligence cooperation and coordination is an especially strong and long-standing facet of the Australia-US alliance, the foundations for which were laid during World War II.³ The outline below

³ For this history, see generally: Jeffrey T. Richelson and Desmond Ball, *The Ties That Bind: Intelligence Cooperation between the UKUSA Countries – the United Kingdom, the United States of America, Canada, Australia and New Zealand*, 2nd edn. (North Sydney: Allen & Unwin, 1990); and Christopher Andrew, "The Growth of the Australian Intelligence Community and the Anglo-American Connection," *Intelligence and National Security* 4, no. 2 (1989): 213–56. A revised and abridged version of that article is found in P. J. Boyce and J. R. Angel, eds., *Diplomacy in the Marketplace: Australia in World Affairs, Volume 7, 1981–90* (Melbourne: Longman Cheshire, 1992), 82–114.

on the origins of Australian-American intelligence cooperation contextualises this aspect of the relationship and Australian officials' awareness of the crisis.

The British-American alliance during World War II demanded intelligence collaboration in a number of areas, including signals intelligence and ocean surveillance. Cooperation began in 1941 and by 1942, the American Office of Strategic Services (OSS) and the British Special Operations Executive (SOE) and its Secret Intelligence Service (SIS), concluded a joint agreement for the coordination of secret intelligence, covert action, and sabotage operations. The world was divided into American or British-led spheres where either the OSS or SOE was the controlling agency and the other the subordinate. The intention was to avoid confusion arising from separate organisations conducting operations in the same country.⁴

Although the two states were already collaborating in signals intelligence, high-level cooperation in this area was formalised under a second agreement—the Britain-United States Agreement—in April 1943. The Agreement also covered staff exchanges, detailed regulations for handling and disseminating ULTRA material (British intelligence produced from intercepted military, rather than diplomatic, traffic), and security regulations for its recipients.⁵

⁴ See Richelson and Ball, *The Ties That Bind*, 1–3.

⁵ Britain obtained intelligence later labelled ULTRA when its code-breakers at Bletchley Park deciphered German military communications encrypted by the ENIGMA machine. Initially, the British kept its attainment, but not the information itself, secret. They told the Americans about their code-breaking success at the same meeting where this agreement was concluded: Richelson and Ball, *The Ties That Bind*, 2.

As intelligence collaboration between the UK and US increased, so too did the involvement of Australia, as well as Canada and New Zealand. The level of Allied cooperation, particularly in signals intelligence and regarding Japan, is underscored by the presence of numerous intelligence facilities in Australia at that time. In April 1942, the Central Bureau of the Allied Intelligence Bureau (AIB) was activated in Melbourne. It was “a combined Allied signals intelligence agency for the Pacific,” run by an American chief with an Australian deputy. It was one of 16 intercept stations that operated in Australia at different periods during World War II; nine of which were Australian, four American, two British, and one Canadian.⁶ Australian agencies, Secret Intelligence Australia (SIA) and Special Operations Australia (which later became the Services Reconnaissance Department) of the AIB, also contributed to Allied efforts, with the latter having conducted an attack against Japanese shipping in Singapore, and raids, for example, in Malaya and Borneo.⁷

Even after World War II ended, intelligence cooperation continued between Australia, the US, the UK, Canada and New Zealand. In 1946, American and British cryptographers determined methods for ongoing intelligence collaboration, and a US Liaison Office was established in London. Plans were devised to avoid duplication of work and the American and British agencies agreed to an exchange programme for

⁶ For more on these facilities in Australia, including their operators and locations, and the contributions of Canada and New Zealand in signals intelligence and ocean surveillance during this period, see Richelson and Ball, *The Ties That Bind*, 3–4. The authors also provided an example of Australian–New Zealand cooperation in signals intelligence, for it was New Zealand’s naval authorities that alerted Australian officials to the presence of Japanese submarines near Sydney Harbour in May 1942.

⁷ See Richelson and Ball, *The Ties That Bind*, 4.

personnel. Importantly, it was decided that each agency would share solved material with the other.⁸

By 1948, post-war intelligence cooperation between the Allies was cemented with the UK-USA Security Agreement, commonly known as the UKUSA Agreement. It is a tiered agreement with the US as the First Party, and Australia, the UK, Canada and New Zealand, the Second Parties.⁹ Australia was formally admitted in 1956.¹⁰ As First Party, the US has dominated the partnership throughout the post-war period. Jeffrey Richelson and Desmond Ball attributed this to the US possessing the greatest signals intelligence collection capability and its considerable subsidising of Australia's and other states' signals intelligence activities, in terms of both finances and resources. They persuasively argued that American capability of challenging Soviet power, and its military supremacy among the Western Allies throughout the Cold War, would have likely influenced intelligence collection priorities. Richelson and Ball claimed that American dominance among the Second Parties is also demonstrated, for example, by the willingness of those parties to provide the US with, or permit it to construct, facilities on their soil.¹¹

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Ibid., 4–5 and 7.

¹⁰ Alan Fewster, “‘We must be careful to avoid seeking intelligence simply for its own sake’,” *Inside Story*, 1 August 2014, <http://insidestory.org.au/we-must-be-careful-to-avoid-seeking-intelligence-simply-for-its-own-sake> (accessed 26 November 2014).

¹¹ Richelson and Ball, *The Ties That Bind*, 7–8. For a comprehensive list of the locations and types of intelligence facilities of the UKUSA parties, including in their own states and abroad as at 1990, see Appendix 1, 333–357.

Signals intelligence is the main feature of the Agreement in which the collection responsibilities of the parties are delineated; each party is responsible for gathering signals intelligence in a particular part of the world. Additionally, the Agreement covers access requirements and handling arrangements regarding intelligence gathered, standardised code words, security agreements for signals intelligence personnel employed by the agencies of each party, and measures for sharing and storing code-worded data.¹² While signals intelligence is at the centre of the Agreement and the post-war relationship, the parties formally cooperate in other areas of intelligence including ocean surveillance, covert activities and security operations.¹³ Although Australia maintains intelligence relationships with other states, the UKUSA partnership is by far the most important to Australia, and likewise the other parties.¹⁴ It was courtesy of the UKUSA relationship that Australia received signals intelligence alerting it to the crisis in Cuba in October 1962.

¹² According to the authors, these requirements for signals intelligence are specified in the series, 'International Regulations on SIGINT' (signals intelligence) (IRSIG): Richelson and Ball, *The Ties That Bind*, 4–5.

¹³ *Ibid.*, 6.

¹⁴ For example, Australia maintains a close relationship with its neighbours, Singapore and Malaysia, in signals intelligence: Richelson and Ball, *The Ties That Bind*, 7.

Australian Intelligence Officials are Alerted to the Crisis

Private Sue Gordon¹⁵ was among personnel of the Defence Signals Branch (DSB)¹⁶ alarmed by the situation in Cuba in October 1962. Gordon was a trained stenographer and member of the Women's Royal Australian Army Corps from 1961–4.¹⁷ At the time of the crisis, Gordon worked as a cipher operator—"the elite in Signals" she claimed—in 403 Signals Regiment. She was assigned to the DSB's station at Watsonia, Victoria, less than 20 kilometres from Melbourne.¹⁸ Established in 1960, the Watsonia station was then "the main signals station in Victoria for the Army," and thus it regularly received a high volume of signals "traffic."¹⁹

Gordon was working the night shift when news of the Cuban situation transpired.²⁰ She recalled seeing the machines (through which signals were relayed) "spewing out" coded tape labeled with the highest security classification.²¹ Despite her training and Top

¹⁵ Sue Gordon was the Commissioner for Aboriginal Planning from 1986–88 and the first indigenous Australian to head a Western Australian government department. In 1988, she became the state's first indigenous magistrate and first full-time Children's Court magistrate, an appointment she held for the next 20 years. During that period, Gordon was also the Commissioner of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission and chaired a range of government initiatives affecting Australian indigenous communities. See "Sue Gordon (2002)," Graduates, Alumni, Faculty of Law, The University of Western Australia, <http://www.law.uwa.edu.au/alumni/graduates/2000s/gordon> (accessed 24 March 2013).

¹⁶ The agency has undergone several name changes. Previously the Defence Signals Bureau, it was renamed the DSB from October 1949 to January 1964. It then became the Defence Signals Division until 1977 when it was renamed the Defence Signals Directorate. In May 2013, it became the Australian Signals Directorate (ASD): "History," ASD, Department of Defence, Australian Government, <http://www.asd.gov.au/about/history.htm> (accessed 12 April 2014).

¹⁷ See: Sue Gordon interviewed by John Bannister, "Bringing Them Home Oral History Project," Perth, 12 October 1999, OH ORAL TRC 5000/52, Oral History and Folklore collection, National Library of Australia, Canberra (NLA); and Sue Gordon interviewed by Noah Riseman, "Indigenous Ex-service Men and Women Oral History Project," Perth, 25 November 2010, OH ORAL TRC 6260/5, Oral History and Folklore collection, NLA. I am grateful to Noah Riseman for this reference.

¹⁸ Gordon interviewed by Riseman, 2010; and Sue Gordon, email to author, 19 March 2013.

¹⁹ See Gordon to author, 19 March 2013.

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ Gordon interviewed by Riseman, 2010. In this interview, Gordon erroneously referred to the Bay of Pigs incident instead of the Cuban Crisis; the former occurred before Gordon signed-up for the Army on 19 October 1961. This was clarified in private correspondence; see Gordon to author, 19 March 2013.

Secret clearance, she “never expected to receive one of those in [her] time in the Army.” Gordon and another private “panicked,” obviously anxious about the situation that was unfolding. And they were not alone: the shift sergeant, a returned soldier from Japan and Korea,²² was “having a fit” she recalled, and promptly contacted senior personnel “to come see all of this.”²³ The Shift Sergeant informed Gordon that such material would result in the Australia's defence force being “put on high alert.”²⁴

It is likely that this signals intelligence alerted Australia's Directorate of Military Intelligence (DMI) to the situation in Cuba. Its Director from 1960–4,²⁵ Colonel (later Major General) Stuart Graham, was so concerned about the state of affairs that he travelled to the US on a “fact finding mission.” He arrived in Washington D.C. prior to President John F. Kennedy's famous televised national address on 22 October.²⁶

²² Gordon to author, 19 March 2013.

²³ Gordon interviewed by Riseman, 2010.

²⁴ Gordon to author, 19 March 2013. Gordon had previously claimed that “the Australian army *went* on alert” (emphasis added); see Gordon interviewed by Riseman, 2010. No evidence has been located to support Gordon's claim that the Army was put on alert.

²⁵ See Ian McNeill and Ashley Ekins, *On the Offensive: The Australian Army in the Vietnam War, January 1967–June 1968*. The Official History of Australia's Involvement in Southeast Asian Conflicts 1948-1975 (Crows Nest, Australia: Allen & Unwin in association with the Australian War Memorial, 2003), 32.

²⁶ Colonel J.O. Langtry (Retired) for Australian Army, conversation with author, 11 January 2013; and Colonel J.O. Langtry, “Colonel John Osborne Langtry's Military Service: Part II, Australian Regular Army,” unpublished memoirs, 87. I am grateful to J.O. Langtry for sharing with me extracts of his memoirs written for his family, and to Desmond Ball for putting us in touch. Kennedy's address is discussed throughout this chapter. For the transcript, see John F. Kennedy Presidential Library and Museum (JFK Library): Papers of John F. Kennedy, Presidential Papers, President's Office Files, Speech Files, JFKPOF-041-018, “Radio and television report to the American people on the Soviet arms build-up in Cuba, 22 October 1962,” <http://www.jfklibrary.org/Asset-Viewer/Archives/JFKPOF-041-018.aspx> (accessed 3 August 2015).

Graham served 39 years in the Australian Army in a variety of command, staff and diplomatic roles.²⁷ He spent 1956 at the United States Armed Forces Staff College before being posted to the Australian Military Mission in Washington D.C. where he worked from 1957–8 as an intelligence officer.²⁸ Graham was respected by his subordinates and “widely regarded as having one of the best minds in the army.”²⁹

According to Graham’s former colleague, the late Major General John Whitelaw, “in the late 1950s, Australia’s defence intelligence arrangements were neither sophisticated nor extensive, falling considerably short of what the developing Cold War environment demanded.” As Director of DMI, Graham sought to develop “a more responsive framework.” He supported progress regarding joint intelligence arrangements and promoted relations with his American and British counterparts. He also understood the importance for Australia to develop and maintain solid relationships with its Southeast Asian neighbours. In 1963, Graham was decorated for his efforts, and was subsequently appointed Deputy Chief of the General Staff (DCGS) (an Australian Army liaison role with the armies of the UKUSA countries) and then Head of the Australian Defence Staff in London.³⁰

²⁷ Graham held command roles in World War II, the Occupation of Japan, and the Vietnam War; see Major General John Whitelaw, “Obituaries: Fighting man who led by inspiration,” *The Australian*, 28 August 1996, 14. Graham is more commonly associated with the controversial barrier minefield installed at Dat Do during the Vietnam War under his command, and consequently, the toll of Australian casualties in Vietnam from mines. Greg Lockhart’s, *The Minefield: An Australian tragedy in Vietnam* (Crows Nest, Australia: Allen & Unwin, 2007) is a source dedicated to this subject. A more even-handed account of Graham and the minefield can be found throughout McNeill and Ekins, *On the Offensive*. Graham’s wife, Joyce, is deceased and attempts to locate their two sons, Stuart and Ray, and Graham’s former colleagues in order to learn more about him, were unsuccessful: Langtry, letter to author, undated (received 10 January 2014); Nancy Whitelaw, telephone conversation with author, 13 January 2014; and Ashley Ekins, email to author, 15 January 2014.

²⁸ See Whitelaw, “Obituaries: Fighting man who led by inspiration,”; and Lockhart, *The Minefield*, 40.

²⁹ McNeill and Ekins, *On the Offensive*, 32.

³⁰ See Whitelaw, “Obituaries: Fighting man who led by inspiration.” For more on his appointments, see McNeill and Ekins, *On the Offensive*, 254 and 498, n.4.

A friend and subordinate of Graham in the DMI, Australian Colonel J.O. ‘JOL’ Langtry (retired), experienced these developments in joint intelligence arrangements with the US first-hand. In 1962, Langtry worked for the US Army as an Exchange Officer (Intelligence)—the first appointed to the Pentagon since World War II.³¹ He was posted to the Office of the Assistant Chief of Staff for Intelligence (OACSI), the senior intelligence body of the US Army.³² The objective of Langtry’s assignment was to advance intelligence collaboration between the Australian and American armies on Indonesia, his area of specialty.³³

Langtry recalled Graham’s visit to the US that October. The arrival of his Australian boss in Washington D.C., he felt, “was in connection with the Cuban Crisis”; that was “no coincidence.” Following their productive meeting in the Australian Embassy on 22 October, Langtry hosted a social gathering in his home that evening in light of Graham’s visit. He also invited his American boss, Lieutenant-Colonel Don Schafer (who had been seconded to a Cuban Task Force), his other American superiors, and some more guests. Langtry observed that “they seemed tense on arrival.” The Americans had brought with them a portable television. Even though Langtry had a television, the Americans did not want to miss seeing their President’s national address on the situation of which, as intelligence officers, they would have been well aware. Little was said after the broadcast and cars soon arrived to collect the Americans and

³¹ See Langtry to author, 11 January 2013; and Langtry, unpublished memoirs, v.

³² See Langtry to author, 11 January 2013. For more on OACSI, see Richelson and Ball, *The Ties That Bind*, 122.

³³ See Langtry to author, 11 January 2013.

their television. A car from Australia's Washington Embassy also arrived earlier than planned to collect Graham, who "had been recalled to Australia post-haste."³⁴

These oral histories are essential to our understanding of Australia's experience of the Cuban Crisis, and more specifically, the intelligence dimension of this history. Their importance should not be underestimated. They demonstrate that some Australian intelligence officials had knowledge of the crisis in Cuba before 22 October. For them, the crisis began before Kennedy publicly announced it, and as is shown later in this chapter, earlier than it did for other Australians. Also, these oral histories illustrate the significance of the crisis in terms of the manner in which intelligence officials responded to the situation. Furthermore, they reveal the close intelligence relationship between Australia and the US. The intelligence Graham possessed seemingly showed the significance of the situation and thus warranted his US visit, but was inadequate to the extent that it justified his "fact-finding mission." By liaising directly with his US counterparts, it was likely that Graham believed he could obtain for Australia a more detailed assessment of the situation and how it was to be managed. The knowledge and understanding he gained of US military culture and intelligence matters—and the networks he presumably established—during his three-year posting to the US, meant Graham was well placed to undertake such a visit. Also, given his objectives regarding joint intelligence collaboration, the Cuban situation presented Graham, and thus Australia, with an opportunity to strengthen its alliance with the US in that regard. Given military personnel are only recalled home in serious circumstances, Graham's

³⁴ Langtry to author, 11 January 2013; and Langtry, unpublished memoirs, 87–8. No evidence identifying who recalled Graham has been located.

recall indicates the significance of the crisis to the Australian Government, his role in relation to it, and the information he possibly gathered in the US.

Although the oral histories are essential elements of Australian intelligence officials' awareness of the crisis, they provide no insight on Australian intelligence on the situation, including how intelligence officials assessed the nuclear threat the crisis posed. Several factors, for example, are unknown: the intelligence obtained from the coded tape or from Graham's US visit; with whom in the Australian intelligence community and beyond this intelligence was shared; and whether this intelligence informed and influenced threat assessments and policy. Nevertheless, the oral histories remain valuable sources because, apart from a single intelligence report discussed in the next chapter, to date no other records have been located or are available regarding Australian intelligence officials and the crisis.³⁵ Given the crisis occurred more than 50 years ago, capturing the oral histories of former Australian public servants directly involved with Australia's response to this crisis is an almost insuperable task. There is the additional dilemma that the secret world of intelligence often wishes to remain just that. In contrast, sources on Australia's experience at the political, diplomatic, and bureaucratic levels are rich and plentiful.

³⁵ The author requested access to records on the Cuban Crisis created by the Joint Intelligence Bureau, the DSB, and the military intelligence services (DMI, Directorate of Naval Intelligence and Security, and the Directorate of Air Force Intelligence) on 22 March 2013. The National Archives of Australia, Canberra (NAA) immediately forwarded the author's requests to the agencies currently controlling these records because it does not have such agency records on the crisis in its custody. More than four years later, these requests remain pending.

Key Australian Diplomats and Public Servants are Informed of the Crisis

In contrast to Australian intelligence officials, Australian diplomats and public servants became aware of the crisis only a matter of hours before Kennedy's address. Australia's Washington Embassy realised that something significant was impending on 22 October when it learnt that Kennedy had requested time on national television for a broadcast that evening on "A subject of the Highest National Urgency." First Secretary to the Embassy, Donald Jasper Munro,³⁶ promptly advised the Department of External Affairs (External Affairs) in Canberra. Due to Australia's longitudinal position, it received Munro's initial communiques in the early hours of 23 October.³⁷ In his first cablegram, Munro noted that Kennedy's meetings scheduled with the National Security Council, Cabinet, and Congressional party leaders indicated the seriousness and urgency of the matter.³⁸ He added that American naval "manoeuvres" in the Caribbean had given the press cause to speculate that the "subject" was Cuba.³⁹

³⁶ Munro was made an Officer of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire (OBE) in 1970 while he was First Assistant Secretary, Economic Division, of the Department of Prime Minister: "Supplement to the London Gazette," 13 June 1970, 6401, <http://www.london-gazette.co.uk/issues/45118/supplements/6401/page.pdf> (accessed 9 January 2014). One US document listed Munro as Minister at Australia's Embassy in Washington in June 1962: JFK Library: Papers of John F. Kennedy, Presidential Papers, White House Staff Files, Sanford Fox File, Social Events, Box 15, 061862 Luncheon (Stag), Prime Minister of Australia — Menzies, Monday June 18 1962 at 1:00pm, "Administrative arrangements for the arrival at Washington of the Right Honorable [*sic*] Robert Gordon Menzies, C.H., Q.C., M.P., Prime Minister of Australia," Office of the Chief of Protocol, Department of State, Washington D.C., 13 June 1962, 2.

³⁷ Canberra was nine hours ahead of London and 14 hours ahead of Washington D.C. and New York (non-daylight saving time).

³⁸ See National Archives of Australia, Canberra (NAA): A1838, 262/12/8/1 part 1, inward cablegram (I.26158), Australian Embassy, Washington (Washington Embassy) to Department of External Affairs, Canberra (External Affairs), 22 October 1962.

³⁹ See NAA: A1838, 262/12/8/1 part 1, inward cablegram (I.26158), Washington Embassy to External Affairs, 22 October 1962. The British press were likewise speculative; see NAA: A1838, 262/12/8/1 part 1, inward cablegram (I.26168), Australian High Commission, London to External Affairs, 22 October 1962.

Subsequently, Munro, along with representatives of 45 other US multilateral and bilateral allies,⁴⁰ was then called to a briefing on the “subject” at the State Department that afternoon before Kennedy’s broadcast.⁴¹ It was Munro, not the Australian Ambassador to the US, Howard Beale, who attended the briefing: Beale had returned to Australia on 21 October for two months’ leave.⁴² The Australian Government, therefore, was without its key envoy at this crisis point. However, Munro demonstrated acumen; prior to the meeting, he correctly deduced the “subject” was Cuba and its “offensive capability.”⁴³ It is also worth noting that the Australian Ambassador to the Soviet Union from 1960–62, Keith Waller, had returned to Australia in mid-September 1962.⁴⁴ However, Waller’s replacement, Stewart Jamieson, did not assume duty in Moscow until 19 November 1962.⁴⁵ Significantly, the Australian Government lacked ambassadorial representation to the two superpowers for the most intense period of the crisis.

⁴⁰ See Roger Hilsman, *The Cuban Missile Crisis: The Struggle Over Policy* (Westport, US: Praeger, 1996), 107.

⁴¹ NAA: A1838, 262/12/8/1 part 1, inward cablegram (I.26164), Munro to External Affairs, 22 October 1962.

⁴² See “Beale Home,” *Sydney Morning Herald*, 22 October 1962, 5. According to the *Adelaide Advertiser*, Beale returned on 22 October 1962: “Ambassador Home,” *Advertiser*, 22 October 1962, 6.

⁴³ NAA: A1838, TS262/12/8/1, inward cablegram (I.26188), Munro to External Affairs, 22 October 1962.

⁴⁴ Keith Waller, *A Diplomatic Life: Some Memories*, Australians in Asia Series No. 6 (Nathan, Queensland: Centre for the Study of Australia-Asia Relations, Griffith University, July 1990), 32. Waller went on to become Ambassador to the US from 1964–1970 and Secretary to the Department of Foreign Affairs from 1970 to his retirement in 1974: “Obituary: Sir Keith Waller. A diplomat of the old school,” *Canberra Times*, 17 November 1992, 7.

⁴⁵ Department of External Affairs, “Representation: Australian Representation Overseas,” *Current Notes on International Affairs* (Current Notes), vol. 33, no. 11, November 1962, 82. Jamieson’s previous posting had been in South America as Ambassador to Brazil from 1960–62: Kathleen Dermody, “Jamieson, Stewart Wolfe (1903–1975),” *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, National Centre of Biography, Australian National University (ANU), <http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/jamieson-stewart-wolfe-10613> (published in hardcopy 1996; accessed online 17 November 2015).

At the State Department meeting at 6:15 p.m. US Eastern Standard Time (EST), Munro received an intelligence briefing from Under Secretary of State, George W. Ball, and Director of the State Department's Bureau of Intelligence and Research, Roger Hilsman, alongside representatives of other US allies. Ball and Hilsman briefed the assembled representatives on the installation of mobile, medium-range ballistic missile (MRBM) and intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) bases in Cuba. Representatives were given the opportunity to grasp the rapidly intensifying situation by viewing reconnaissance photographs of the sites. Hilsman detailed the nature of the Soviet threat and told representatives that the US had no concrete evidence of nuclear warheads in Cuba. Nevertheless, he advised that the missiles would be pointless without nuclear warheads, which could be easily hidden, and the US believed storage for them was under construction. Munro inquired privately about the number of ballistic missile bases, but Hilsman declined to disclose this information. Ball and Hilsman advised representatives that their heads of state would receive the same briefing in their capitals, as well as an advance copy of Kennedy's address.⁴⁶ The briefing was critical for Australia. It provided Munro, and subsequently the Australian Government, with access to photographic evidence of the missile build-up and the most detailed information it had on the situation. The details of the American response to the missile build-up, however, were excluded from the briefing, leaving representatives to obtain that information directly from the presidential address, which immediately followed the meeting.⁴⁷

⁴⁶ NAA: A1838, TS262/12/8/1, inward cablegram (I.26204), Munro to External Affairs, 22 October 1962, 1–4.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 1.

Afterwards, Munro cabled External Affairs; it received his communique at approximately 10:30 a.m. Australian Eastern Standard Time (AEST).⁴⁸

While Munro was forwarding his initial cablegrams, an assistant secretary in External Affairs, William (Bill) D. Forsyth, was awakened by a telephone call to his home at 4:00 a.m. One of Forsyth's responsibilities was Australian–American relations, which involved liaison with the US Embassy, Canberra. The caller was the First Secretary to the US Embassy and the American counsellor handling the Cuban Crisis, Donald W. Lamm. Lamm advised Forsyth that the Embassy “had just received a cable asking them to inform the Australian Government that President Kennedy was going to make [...] a statement of the very highest importance, a matter of war and peace.”⁴⁹ Lamm asked to meet with Forsyth at the earliest time possible so that he could pass on the State Department's cable summary and extracts sent for the Government.⁵⁰

After Lamm visited Forsyth in his office at approximately 5:30–6:00 a.m., Forsyth promptly contacted Deputy Secretary of the Department of Prime Minister, James (Jim)

⁴⁸ Secretary to Cabinet, John Bunting, noted at the beginning of the Cabinet meeting on 23 October that Minister for External Affairs, Garfield Barwick, remarked: “Message from Ambassador in US now coming through”: NAA: A11099, 1/59, Cabinet Notebook, 23 October 1962. The corresponding time of the meeting at the State Department, Kennedy's address, and the Cabinet meeting, as well as Ambassador Beale's absence, strongly suggests the message was Munro's cablegram (I.26204). All times referred to in this thesis are in AEST unless otherwise indicated.

⁴⁹ William Douglass Forsyth interviewed by Mel Pratt, “Mel Pratt Collection,” Canberra, January–February 1972, OH ORAL TRC 121/27, transcript, Oral History and Folklore collection, NLA, 287–8.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 288.

F. Nimmo, at his home, whom he thought would have access to Menzies.⁵¹ Nimmo, who had occupied this position since 1960, was a Treasury veteran, having entered that Department in 1939; he was the First Assistant Secretary of the Banking, Trade and Industry Branch before joining the Department of Prime Minister.⁵² At around 7:00–7:30 a.m., Nimmo visited Forsyth’s office to collect the documents delivered by Lamm and remarked he was reluctant to disturb “the old man” before 9:00 a.m. A worker until late at night, Menzies was not considered at his best at the beginning of Cabinet meetings, which would commence around 10:00–10:30 a.m. One minister analogised, “Seated in his chair he reminded me sometimes of Cape Town’s Table Mountain capped by cloud;” sunlight and a cigar were helpful stimulants.⁵³ Forsyth mentioned to Nimmo that he would leave it to his best judgement, but emphasised that it was “a very important matter and rather urgent.” Consequently, Nimmo placed an early telephone call to the PM’s Canberra residence and then “he took the papers up to Mr Menzies’ room [...] and they went through them.”⁵⁴

⁵¹ Ibid., 288. According to this transcript, Forsyth contacted “Jim Miller ... then an assistant secretary in the Prime Minister’s Department.” This is most likely a transcription error and should have instead noted Jim Nimmo, who then occupied that role in the Department, and whose name has thus been inserted here. Director of the Historical Publications and Information Section of the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, David Lee, was unable to locate one “Jim Miller” of the Department at that time and agreed the reference should be to Nimmo; see David Lee, email to author, 17 April 2013. Donald Lamm’s name, which appears in the transcript as “Don Lamb”, is also incorrectly spelt. The transcript is a copy of the original (according to a handwritten note on the first page) because Forsyth never returned his annotated copy. This indicates the transcript was not redacted. It is also possible that the interviewer/ interviewee had Lamm confused with Knox Lamb of the American Consulate in Brisbane. For more on Lamm’s diplomatic postings, see Steven M. Speich, “In Memoriam: Donald Wakeham Lamm, 1914–1996,” <https://sora.unm.edu/sites/default/files/journals/auk/v116n03/p0818-p0818.pdf> (accessed 12 July 2017).

⁵² JFK Library, National Security Files (NSF), Countries, Box 8A, Australia General 7/6/63–7/8/63, “Memorandum for Mr. McGeorge Bundy, The White House” (with enclosure: biographic sketch, “Nimmo, James Ferguson, Australia, Deputy Secretary of the Prime Minister’s Department”) from Department of State, Washington, D.C. (Department of State), undated.

⁵³ Alexander Downer, *Six Prime Ministers* (Melbourne: Hill of Content, 1982), 17–8.

⁵⁴ Ibid., 288.

While Nimmo risked getting the PM out of bed—and the wrong side for that matter—it was the right decision.⁵⁵ Menzies then had the opportunity to review the State Department documents prior to Kennedy's national address as the State Department intended. It was important to have the PM informed of the Cuban situation from the earliest possible moment, given the speed at which it unfolded and that it was raised in Cabinet and Parliament later that morning, as is discussed further in this, and the next, chapter.

It is possible that this was not the first Menzies had heard of the crisis. In this period, it was commonplace for the intelligence agencies to brief the PM, and also the Minister for External Affairs, on such highly classified matters.⁵⁶ While Menzies and Barwick *officially* learnt of the crisis on 23 October, Australian intelligence officials—given their prior awareness as has been demonstrated—probably informed them earlier. Desmond Ball has written that policymakers however often have considerable difficulty utilising intelligence, especially signals intelligence, for sometimes they are unable to capitalise on their special knowledge because of the risk of revealing their sources and methods.⁵⁷

⁵⁵ Three years later, the Secretary of the Department, John Bunting, made the wrong decision. He delayed telephoning Menzies at 8:00 a.m. to advise of Singapore's separation from the Federation of Malaysia because the PM did not expect or like to be called at that time. However, when Bunting informed Menzies later at 10:00 a.m., noting his decision to defer due to the time and in hope that he could furnish him with a fuller report, the PM silently then verbally disapproved, his displeasure lingering for some days: John Bunting, *R. G. Menzies: A Portrait* (Sydney: Allen & Unwin, 1988), 110–1.

⁵⁶ See Desmond Ball, conversation with author, 9 January 2013. The author's attempts to access records created by the intelligence agencies on the crisis—see n.35—and locate records to support this from the departments of Prime Minister and External Affairs were unsuccessful.

⁵⁷ Desmond Ball, "Silent witness: Australian intelligence and East Timor," *The Pacific Review* 14, no. 1 (2001): 36.

Given the UKUSA Agreement was then secret,⁵⁸ Menzies and Barwick may have found it difficult to capitalise on the signals intelligence the Government had obtained on the Cuban situation.

It is very likely that the Director-General of the Australian Secret Intelligence Service (ASIS) from 1960–68, Walter Cawthorn,⁵⁹ was, like Graham, one of the senior Australian intelligence officials who had advance notice of the Cuban situation. Perhaps Cawthorn discussed Cuba with Barwick when the two met in Melbourne on the afternoon of 22 October — interestingly, the day before official news of the crisis broke.⁶⁰ A record of what was discussed however, has not been located. ASIS by then came under the Department of External Affairs, with the director responsible directly to the Minister.⁶¹ However, Barwick and Cawthorn were among few Australians then aware of the agency's existence; established in 1952, ASIS remained a secret—including from members of the government—for over 20 years.⁶²

⁵⁸ In 1977, the Australian PM refused to respond to a question from the Opposition Foreign Affairs Spokesman as to whether Australia was a Party to the Agreement: Richelson and Ball, *The Ties That Bind*, 5–6. These days, the ASD refers to the Agreement on its website, and includes a hyperlink to The National Archives UK website, specifically, the reference details for Government Communications Headquarters (GCHQ) files on the Agreement released in June 2010: “UKUSA Allies,” ASD, Department of Defence, Australian Government, <http://www.asd.gov.au/partners/allies.htm> (accessed 2 May 2015).

⁵⁹ Peter Hohnen, “Cawthorn, Sir Walter Joseph (1896–1970),” Australian Dictionary of Biography, National Centre of Biography, ANU, <http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/cawthorn-sir-walter-joseph-9715> (published in hardcopy 1993; accessed online 14 November 2014).

⁶⁰ NAA, Sydney: M3943, 1, [Papers of Sir Garfield Barwick] Diaries, 1962 appointment diary (small size), 22 October 1962. ASIS was then based in Melbourne: Fewster, ““We must be careful to avoid seeking intelligence simply for its own sake’.”

⁶¹ Peter Edwards, *Arthur Tange: Last of the Mandarins* (Crows Nest, New South Wales: Allen & Unwin, 2006), 104.

⁶² “History,” ASIS [foreign intelligence] [*sic*], Australian Government, <http://www.asis.gov.au/About-Us/History.html> (accessed 14 November 2014). According to one report, Calwell, as Leader of the Opposition, was briefed on the existence of ASIS (or “listed” to use the ASIS term), but not his successor, Gough Whitlam: Brian Toohey and William Pinwill, *Oyster: The Story of the Australian Secret Intelligence Service* (Port Melbourne, Victoria: William Heinemann Australia, 1989), 83 and 85. Even in December 1970, former Minister for External Affairs, R. G. Casey, kept Cawthorn’s role as the head of ASIS secret. In an obituary on the former ASIS Director-General for publication in Melbourne’s *Age* and *Sun* newspapers, Casey referred to Cawthorn as an “Advisor to the Department of Defence”: NAA, Melbourne: M1129, CAWTHORN/W J, obituary on Cawthorn for the *Age* and *Sun* by R. G. Casey, 6 December 1970, 1.

Prime Minister Menzies is Briefed on the Crisis

In addition to Nimmo's briefing, Menzies was briefed by the American Ambassador to Australia, William C. Battle. This was as per Kennedy's instructions, which required Battle to deliver personally a message and advance copy of his address to Menzies. This was also consistent with the State Department's advice to Munro at the meeting hosted by Hilsman and Ball.⁶³ Battle commenced his ambassadorship, which happened to be his first, only three months before the crisis. A lawyer and former manager of Kennedy's presidential campaign in Virginia, he was also Kennedy's friend, the two having met while commanding patrol torpedo boats in the Pacific during World War II.⁶⁴ Battle felt he quickly established a strong rapport with Menzies, whom he admired.⁶⁵ The Battle and Menzies families became friends⁶⁶ and they saw one another on a regular basis.⁶⁷ Whenever Battle had important information from the White House for the PM, he contacted Menzies directly. Accordingly, Battle claimed "there was never more than a two-hour delay in seeing him. Of course, the Cuban Missile Crisis is one of those situations." Battle added that "after receiving the communication from Washington as to what was going on ... [he] delivered all of the background to the Prime Minister before it happened."⁶⁸ Battle however was in Adelaide, South Australia, from

⁶³ See NAA: A1838, 262/12/8/1 Part 3, Kennedy to Menzies, 23 October 1962.

⁶⁴ Battle held this ambassadorship from 1962–4. For more on Battle, see "Biographical Note," William C. Battle interviewed by Dennis O'Brien, Charlottesville, Virginia, 2 March 1970, JFKOH-WCB-02, transcript, John F. Kennedy Oral History collection, JFK Library; and JFK Library, NSF, Countries, Box 8, Australia General 6/6/62–6/15/62, "Memorandum for Mr. McGeorge Bundy, The White House" (with enclosure: biographic sketch, William C. Battle, United States Ambassador to Australia) from Department of State, 11 June 1962.

⁶⁵ See Battle interviewed by O'Brien, 1970.

⁶⁶ See A. W. Martin, *Robert Menzies: A Life, Volume 2, 1944–1978* (Carlton South, Victoria: Melbourne University Press, 1999), 550–1.

⁶⁷ Heather Henderson, ed., *Letters to My Daughter: Robert Menzies, letters, 1955–1975* (Millers Point, NSW: Pier 9, 2011), 108, n.1.

⁶⁸ Battle interviewed by O'Brien, 2 March 1970, paras. 65–6. See also NAA: A1838, 262/12/8/1 part 3, Kennedy to Menzies, 23 October 1962.

20–27 October. Although Menzies had a strong and well-known distaste for the telephone, which he rarely used,⁶⁹ it is plausible that Battle rang Menzies and “delivered” his briefing before Kennedy’s broadcast (“it”), and therefore early on the morning of 23 October.⁷⁰

Menzies also received a personal letter from Kennedy. This letter, and the advance copy of Kennedy’s address, were probably amongst the documents Lamm provided Forysth and, subsequently, Nimmo delivered to Menzies. In his address, Kennedy referred to the nuclear *capabilities* of the weapons in Cuba. However, in his letter, he wrote as though he had evidence of nuclear warheads in Cuba. Specifically, Kennedy stated that evidence of offensive nuclear missile bases installed by the Soviet Union in Cuba was “accurate beyond question,” and he emphasised the offensive nature of the weapons. Kennedy also recalled his public statement of 13 September 1962 where he pledged that

if at any time the Communist buildup in Cuba were to...become an offensive military base of significant capacity for the Soviet Union, then this country would do whatever must be done to protect its own security and that of its allies.⁷¹

⁶⁹ Bunting, *R. G. Menzies*, 36–7; and Henderson, *Letters to My Daughter*, x.

⁷⁰ That Battle delivered his briefing to Menzies by telephone is supported by the absence of a cablegram on it, and newspaper articles that demonstrate Battle remained in Adelaide and maintained his busy schedule. For the overall programme of Battle’s Adelaide visit, see: “U.S. Envoy’s Visit to Adelaide,” *Advertiser*, 20 October 1962, 6. For more on his programme on 23 October, see: Battle interviewed by O’Brien, 1970, paragraphs 66–8; M. Armitage, “About People: big day for U.S. envoy’s wife,” *Advertiser*, 23 October 1962, 21; “Vice-Regal,” *Advertiser*, 24 October 1962, 2; “‘Most Careful Decision’: visit by envoy,” *Advertiser*, 24 October 1962, 3; and M. Armitage, “About People: A.A.A. dinner. U.S. ambassador is guest,” *Advertiser*, 24 October 1962, 19.

⁷¹ NAA: A1838, 262/12/8/1 Part 3, letter from Kennedy to Menzies, 23 October 1962. For Kennedy’s full press statement and excerpts of replies to questions of 13 September 1962, see Document III-37: “Unilateral military intervention (in Cuba) on the part of the United States cannot currently be either required or justified,” in *American Foreign Policy: Current Documents, 1962* (Washington, D.C.: Department of State, U.S. Government Printing Office, 1966), 373–5.

He advised Menzies of his immediate course of action, briefly repeating what was outlined in his address. Kennedy also noted that the Australian Ambassador in Washington D.C. would be “briefed on the details.”⁷² The briefing to which Kennedy referred was likely the one Munro attended at the State Department that preceded his address. Kennedy concluded that he hoped Menzies would ask Australia’s Permanent Representative to the UN in New York, James Plimsoll, “to work closely with [the US Ambassador to the UN] Adlai Stevenson and speak forthrightly in support of” the American resolution presented to the UN Security Council.⁷³

Menzies was one of 43 political leaders to whom a presidential letter was sent.⁷⁴ New Zealand Prime Minister, Keith Holyoake, also received a letter from Kennedy. The Prime Ministers’ letters were almost identical. Menzies’ letter was more personalised than Holyoake’s letter; Kennedy addressed him as “Bob.” Kennedy also referred to Plimsoll by his name rather than his position and expressed hope that Australia’s Permanent Representative would be asked “to work *closely*” with Stevenson.⁷⁵ In contrast, Kennedy greeted Holyoake impersonally as “Mr. Prime Minister” and stated that he hoped the New Zealand PM would “instruct [his] representative in New York to work *actively* with the United States ... in the [UN].” Holyoake’s letter also included an additional, concluding sentence: “The Department of State will keep your Ambassador informed of all developments.”⁷⁶ Its absence from Menzies’ letter suggests this was

⁷² Ibid.

⁷³ Ibid.

⁷⁴ Hilsman, *The Cuban Missile Crisis*, 106.

⁷⁵ NAA: A1838, 262/12/8/1 part 3, Kennedy to Menzies, 23 October 1962. Emphasis added.

⁷⁶ Archives New Zealand (ANZ): Cuba: Political Affairs–General [10/62-10/62], ABHS 950 W4627/4461, 399/4/1, 3, Kennedy to Holyoake, 23 October 1962. Emphasis added.

implied. It is clear from the letters that Kennedy had a closer relationship with Menzies than with Holyoake. Menzies however, was not favoured in terms of information sharing. On 23 October, Australia and New Zealand seemed to have a somewhat limited, yet equal, awareness of the crisis compared to other US allies.

The Timing of Australian Officials' Learning of the Crisis and Comparisons with Other US Allies

The timeframe in which the Australian Government learnt of the crisis contrasts with existing scholarship on Australia and the crisis and some other US allies' experiences. In one of her studies outlined in the Introduction, Prue Torney-Parlicki stated: "Two days before Kennedy's broadcast, the department [External Affairs] sent a cablegram to Australian embassies listing aspects of the crisis to be kept in mind, including Australia's declared support for the United States."⁷⁷ This claim is incorrect: public servants in External Affairs had no knowledge of the crisis on 20 October; as has been demonstrated, they learnt of the crisis on 23 October. Furthermore, the Australian Government first declared its support for the US on 23 October; this will be addressed in the last part of this chapter. The first page of the cablegram Torney-Parlicki cited to support her claim was erroneously dated 20 October. A closer examination reveals its true date, 29 October, which was noted on the final page. Additionally, Torney-Parlicki quoted a statement in the cablegram regarding US defence capabilities in Southeast Asia

⁷⁷ Torney-Parlicki, *Behind the News*, 285. Torney-Parlicki made a similar statement in "Lies, Diplomacy and the ABC," 47.

during the crisis.⁷⁸ This quotation originally appeared in a paper prepared for Barwick, which he first received on 25 October, and not on 20 October.⁷⁹ This thesis therefore revises earlier scholarship regarding the date on which public servants in External Affairs learnt of the crisis, and corrects Torney-Parlicki's claim that they, or the Australian Government more generally, received such significant advance notice of the crisis.

Although the Australian Government did not officially receive the advance notice Torney-Parlicki claimed, some of its allies did. Before his State Department meeting, Munro suspected that some US allies knew more than they admitted, and therefore he believed Australia was being kept in the dark. He told External Affairs: "I know that the British have been informed about the nature of the crisis and what is to be done about it, but they have been sworn to absolute secrecy." Munro did not disclose the source of his information⁸⁰ and the UK did not provide Australia with any indication of what it knew.

Munro was correct: the UK, which the US considered to be a "key ally," had advance notice of the crisis. On 17 October 1962 during a meeting of the Executive Committee of the National Security Council (ExComm)—a group of senior advisers assembled by

⁷⁸ Torney-Parlicki's source is NAA: A1209/80, 1962/920 part 1, but it does not contain the cablegram to which she referred. The actual source of this information is NAA: A1838, 262/12/8/1 part 1, outward cablegram (O.19418), External Affairs to Australian Mission to UN, New York, and Washington Embassy, 20 October 1962, correct date: 29 October 1962. Pages 2–4 of this four-page cablegram are located later in this file and not with the initial and erroneously dated page.

⁷⁹ See NAA: A1838, 262/12/8/1 part 3, External Affairs paper on "The Cuban Crisis" with annotations, William D. Forsyth to Barwick, 25 October 1962, "Conclusion," 5–7.

⁸⁰ NAA: A1838, TS262/12/8/1, inward cablegram (I.26188), Munro to Department of External Affairs, 22 October 1962.

the President during the Cuban crisis to secretly deliberate on the situation⁸¹—Secretary of State, Dean Rusk, suggested a military strike against the MRBMs. He stated that as part of that proposed action, the US “inform key allies,” probably the day before. Allies considered “key” included British PM, Harold Macmillan; French President, Charles de Gaulle; West German Chancellor, Konrad Adenauer; and “possibly the Turks and a few Latin American Presidents.” Menzies was not named; Australia was not considered one of the “key allies” to be informed in advance of the Cuban situation or Rusk’s proposed response to it.⁸²

While a military strike on the MRBMs did not eventuate, the US nevertheless provided the UK with advance notice of the Cuban situation and its alternative response to it. Macmillan became aware of the crisis on 19 October. So too did the British Ambassador to the US, David Ormsby Gore, and senior British officials.⁸³ The latter had been briefed in-person by the Deputy Director for Intelligence of the US Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), Ray Cline, at a conference on intelligence methodology at CIA headquarters.⁸⁴ Although Australian intelligence officials might have attended this

⁸¹ For further discussion on the composition of ExComm and its role during the crisis, see David R. Gibson, *Talk at the Brink: Deliberation and Decision During the Cuban Missile Crisis* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2012), ch. 3.

⁸² *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1961–1963, Volume XI, Cuban Missile Crisis and Aftermath*, eds. Edward C. Keefer, Charles S. Sampson, and Louis J. Smith (Washington, D.C.: United States Government Printing Office, 1996), Document 23: “Memorandum for the File,” <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1961-63v11/d23> (accessed 25 February 2016).

⁸³ See L. V. Scott, *Macmillan, Kennedy and the Cuban Missile Crisis: Political, Military and Intelligence Aspects* (Hampshire: Macmillan Press, 1999), 39–48.

⁸⁴ Cline briefed: Director of the Joint Intelligence Bureau, Kenneth Strong; Chairman of the Joint Intelligence Committee, Hugh Stephenson; Cabinet Secretary designate, Burke Trend; and Counsellor, British Embassy, Washington, Thomas Brimelow: *ibid*.

conference, no records are available that confirm this.⁸⁵ According to Len Scott, the British Government may have unofficially learned of the crisis via intelligence channels as early as 17 October.⁸⁶ However, Macmillan did not receive official notification of the crisis until 21 October. He recorded in his diary: “About 10pm I got a message from President Kennedy, giving a short account of the serious situation wh. [which] was developing between US and USSR [Soviet Union], over Cuba.” Interestingly, that was the first time Macmillan mentioned the crisis in his diary despite daily entries on 19 and 20 October 1962.⁸⁷ What should be emphasised, however, is that Kennedy had made personal contact with Macmillan at 10:00 p.m. on 21 October (Greenwich Mean Time (GMT)). This meant, taking into account the previous section, that Menzies was informed of the Cuban Crisis just over 24 hours later than the British PM.⁸⁸ Furthermore, at noon on 22 October 1962, US Ambassador to the UK from 1961–69, David K. E. Bruce, called on Macmillan and presented a “long letter” from Kennedy and “a great dossier” to prove the secret Soviet missile deployments in Cuba, contrary to the specific assurances given by the Soviet Government.⁸⁹ Menzies did not receive similar documents until more than 10 hours later.

⁸⁵ The author’s request for a review of classified records on this conference was denied in February 2013. The relevant record is John F. Kennedy Presidential Library and Museum (JFK Library): National Security Files (NSF), Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), General, Conference on Intelligence 10/62, 8/62–3/63.

⁸⁶ Scott, *Macmillan, Kennedy and the Cuban Missile Crisis*, 39–48.

⁸⁷ Harold Macmillan, *The Macmillan Diaries: Prime Minister and After, 1957–66*, ed. by Peter Catterall (London: Macmillan, 2011), 508 (21 October 1962). See also Peter Catterall, “Modifying ‘a very dangerous message’: Britain, the non-aligned and the UN during the Cuban missile crisis,” in *An International History of the Cuban Missile Crisis: A 50-year retrospective*, David Gioe, Len Scott and Christopher Andrews, eds. Studies in Intelligence Series (Oxon: Routledge, 2014), 73.

⁸⁸ Canberra was nine hours ahead of London and 14 hours ahead of Washington D.C. and New York (non-daylight saving time).

⁸⁹ Macmillan, *The Macmillan Diaries*, 508 (22 October 1962). In that meeting, Bruce did not provide Macmillan with an advance copy of the President’s national address; it arrived at approximately 5:00p.m.: *ibid.*, 509 (22 October 1962).

The advance notice that Macmillan received meant that the British Government had more time than Australia, and other allies, in which to consider the Cuban situation and respond to the US course of action. As shown earlier in this chapter, most US allies only heard about the crisis immediately prior to Kennedy's national address on 22 October 1962 at 7:00 p.m. (EST), the President's speech having informed them of how the US proposed to respond to the situation. By the time Kennedy delivered his address, Macmillan and British Foreign Secretary from 1960–63, Alec Douglas-Home, had already replied to Kennedy's letter, in which they said that they would "support him in his determination to prevent the Russians 'get away' [*sic*] with this new act of aggression."⁹⁰ Although the British were swift to pledge their support for the US *privately*, Chapter 2 will show that the Australian Government was quicker to do so *publicly*. Nonetheless, the British could promptly express their support for the US in the Cuban Crisis because of the advance notice provided to them by the Kennedy Administration.

The advance notice that the US gave the UK reflects the "special relationship" the two states had in this period. This was, in part, a result of the close friendship between Kennedy and Ormsby Gore.⁹¹ Even though the US and the UK were Australia's closest

⁹⁰ Ibid., 509–10 (22 October 1962).

⁹¹ For an excellent examination of this relationship, specifically, the "unique intimacy" between Ormsby-Gore and Kennedy, see Michael F. Hopkins, "David Ormsby Gore, Lord Harlech, 1961–65," in Michael F. Hopkins, Saul Kelly and John W. Young (eds.), *The Washington Embassy: British Ambassadors to the United States, 1939–77* (Basingstoke, UK: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), 130–49. See also Scott, *Macmillan, Kennedy and the Cuban Missile Crisis*, 94; and Michael Dobbs, *One Minute to Midnight* (New York: Arrow, 2009), 215. Indicative of that special relationship was Britain's foreknowledge of the Bay of Pigs invasion in 1961 and its agreement with the US for the latter to use its Caribbean territories for subsequent combat operations; see Nigel J. Ashton, *Kennedy, Macmillan and the Cold War: The Irony of Interdependence* (Basingstoke, UK: Palgrave, 2002), 66–7; and Scott, *Macmillan, Kennedy and the Cuban Missile Crisis*, 27.

allies, evidently, it did not have the “special relationship” with them that they shared with each other.

In Munro’s cablegram to External Affairs where he suspected the British were aware of the crisis, he implied that Canadian Ambassador to the US, Charles Ritchie, also knew more than he stated, and therefore so did the Canadian Government. Although in their discussion Ritchie claimed also to be uninformed, the language he used to describe the situation indicated to Munro he had discussed it with US Secretary of State, Dean Rusk. Ritchie also remarked to Munro “that there had recently been a good deal of intelligence material” on a situation arising for the US regarding “an assessment of offensive capacity.”⁹² External Affairs had therefore been advised by Munro that Australia was less privileged than some of its allies regarding its awareness of the crisis. In terms of how the Kennedy Administration planned to proceed, the President's national address would be most informative.

President Kennedy’s Address to the American People

On 22 October 1962 at 7:00 p.m. (US Eastern Standard Time (EST)), President Kennedy interrupted evening broadcasting to address the nation, and most of the world, on the situation in Cuba. In a direct and sombre speech lasting 17 minutes,⁹³ he detailed the crisis in Cuba and his Administration’s plan of action. While Prime Minister

⁹² NAA: A1838, TS262/12/8/1, inward cablegram (I.26188), Munro to Department of External Affairs, 22 October 1962.

⁹³ Stacey Bredhoff, *To the Brink: JFK and the Cuban Missile Crisis* (Washington D.C.: Foundation for the National Archives, 2012), 40.

Menzies had an advance copy of the address, as discussed earlier, this was the first others had heard of the situation.

Beginning with a reference to the Soviet build-up in Cuba, Kennedy informed his audience that there was now unmistakable evidence that “a series of offensive missile sites is now in preparation on that imprisoned island.” He asserted that their purpose was “to provide a nuclear strike capability against the Western Hemisphere.” Covering much of what was disclosed to the representatives of US allies at the State Department meeting, Kennedy claimed:

This urgent transformation of Cuba into an important strategic base—by the presence of these large, long-range and clearly offensive weapons of sudden mass destruction—constitutes an explicit threat to the peace and security of all the Americas.

The President declared that the US would “not prematurely or unnecessarily risk the costs of world-wide nuclear war in which even the fruits of victory would be ashes in our mouth—but neither will we shrink from that risk at any time it must be faced.” Acting in “the defense of our own [US] security and that of the entire Western Hemisphere,” he then outlined his Administration’s initial, seven-step response.

First, the Kennedy Administration stated that it would impose a quarantine on the shipment of offensive military equipment to Cuba. Second, it would continue to survey Cuba and the build-up. Third, Kennedy declared:

It shall be the policy of this nation to regard any nuclear missile launched from Cuba against any nation in the Western Hemisphere as an attack by the Soviet Union on the United States requiring a full retaliatory response upon the Soviet Union.⁹⁴

Although scholars have never described it as one, arguably, this third step represents a presidential doctrine, just like the Truman Doctrine of 1947 and the Eisenhower Doctrine of 1957.⁹⁵ In essence, the ‘Kennedy Doctrine of 1962’ declared that the US would retaliate against the Soviet Union if an attack was launched from Cuba against the Western Hemisphere. In a similar vein to other doctrines, it strongly reflects US unilateralism, which is discussed further in the next chapter.

Fourth, the US reinforced its base at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, and put additional units on standby. Fifth, it called for an “immediate meeting” of the Organ of Consultation of the Organization of American States (OAS). Sixth, Kennedy advised that his Administration was seeking an emergency meeting of the UN Security Council. He further advised that the US resolution would “call for the prompt dismantling and withdrawal of all offensive weapons in Cuba, under the supervision of UN observers, before the quarantine can be lifted.” Seventh, and finally, Kennedy called on Khrushchev “to halt and eliminate this clandestine, reckless and provocative threat to

⁹⁴ John F. Kennedy Presidential Library and Museum (JFK Library): Papers of John F. Kennedy, Presidential Papers, President's Office Files, Speech Files, JFKPOF-041-018, “Radio and television report to the American people on the Soviet arms build-up in Cuba, 22 October 1962,” <http://www.jfklibrary.org/Asset-Viewer/Archives/JFKPOF-041-018.aspx> (accessed 3 August 2015). The Department of External Affairs included a transcript of the President’s address in its monthly digest *Current Notes on International Affairs* (Current Notes), vol. 33, no. 10, October 1962, 41–5.

⁹⁵ In the Truman Doctrine, the US declared that it would “assist free peoples who are resisting attempted subjugation by armed minorities or by outside pressures.” While the doctrine was initially proclaimed to obtain congressional support for aid to Greece and Turkey to prevent the possibility of Communist subversion, it underpinned US Cold War and modern foreign policy. The Eisenhower Doctrine declared that the US would render any Middle Eastern government assistance, if requested, to prevent a Communist takeover. For a summary of presidential doctrines declared later in the Cold War, see Joan Hoff, “The American Century: From Sarajevo to Sarajevo,” *Diplomatic History* 23, no. 2 (1999): 290, n. 8.

world peace and to stable relations between our two nations.”⁹⁶ Not only was the content of the President’s address significant, so was the medium through which he delivered it.

Television and the Crisis

Kennedy was the first US President to use television effectively to address the American people. He held 64 press conferences during his presidency, and unlike those given by his predecessors, they were broadcast live on television without delay or editing. On average, each was watched by 18 million viewers.⁹⁷ Additionally, Kennedy delivered live televised speeches to the nation from the Oval Office. His address on 22 October at 7:00 p.m. EST on what would become known as the Cuban Missile Crisis was one such occasion.

Kennedy’s televised address was a pivotal moment in the Cuban Crisis and in American television history. Writing on the evolution of American television, Erik Barnouw dedicated a section of his study to the crisis and, in particular, to Kennedy’s address.⁹⁸ According to Barnouw, the important role television played “was so much taken for granted” that Administration officials “recommended not only what should be done, but what President Kennedy should say on the air.” Kennedy’s address was, he asserted, an

⁹⁶ JFK Library: Papers of John F. Kennedy, Presidential Papers, President's Office Files, Speech Files, JFKPOF-041-018, “Radio and television report to the American people on the Soviet arms build-up in Cuba, 22 October 1962,” <http://www.jfklibrary.org/Asset-Viewer/Archives/JFKPOF-041-018.aspx> (accessed 3 August 2015).

⁹⁷ See “John F. Kennedy and the Press,” JFK Library, <http://www.jfklibrary.org/JFK/JFK-in-History/John-F-Kennedy-and-the-Press.aspx> (accessed 31 March 2014).

⁹⁸ Erik Barnouw, *Tube of Plenty: The Evolution of American Television*, 2nd rev. edn. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990), 307–12.

“ultimatum via TV” to Khrushchev. It was delivered by television in order to give it “maximum force,” which could not be effected “merely through diplomatic channels.” The intention was to counter any public perception following the Bay of Pigs incident that Kennedy was “soft on communism.” And the timing was critical: campaigns were underway for midterm elections, typically regarded as an opportunity for voters to demonstrate their level of satisfaction with the sitting president and party. Viewers saw Kennedy “fully in control,” the broadcast having shown him as “a brilliant technician in the consolidation and use of political power,”⁹⁹ and arguably, television.

President Kennedy’s televised address has become central to how the Cuban Crisis is remembered. Those with an interest in this Cold War episode would recognise a photograph of customers in a Californian department store gathered around television sets watching Kennedy deliver his address. This photograph, taken by the renowned staff photographer at the American news magazine *Life*, Ralph Crane, is an iconic image associated with the crisis. Its significance was emphasised in an exhibition marking the fiftieth anniversary of the crisis, “To the Brink: JFK and the Cuban Missile Crisis,” curated by Stacey Bredhoff of the National Archives’ John F. Kennedy Presidential Library and Museum.¹⁰⁰ Crane’s photograph appeared several times throughout the publication accompanying the exhibition, including the front cover.¹⁰¹ It also seems to have been what Bredhoff pictured when designing the opening exhibit. On entering,

⁹⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰⁰ “To the Brink: JFK and the Cuban Missile Crisis,” National Archives and Records Administration, exhibition: 12 October 2012–3 February 2013, Lawrence F. O’Brien Gallery, National Archives Building, Washington D.C. The exhibition was held at the John F. Kennedy Presidential Library and Museum, Boston, Massachusetts, from 12 April–11 November 2013.

¹⁰¹ See Bredhoff, *To the Brink*, front cover, 40, and 82–3.

visitors found themselves in a dark room that contained a single television set playing an excerpt of Kennedy's address.¹⁰² Cleverly, Bredhoff transported visitors 50 years back in time to where they, just like the customers in the Californian department store, would watch the President warn of the possibility of nuclear war. It was the first the American people had heard of the impending crisis in Cuba, and it was therefore a fitting start for visitors to the exhibition. While enabling those who watched Kennedy's address in 2012 to relate to those in 1962, Bredhoff also located the American people in the Cuban Crisis. The emphasis placed on the televised nature of Kennedy's address in this exhibition and accompanying publication, has ensured this aspect of the crisis has been preserved.

The significance of Kennedy's address to the histories of the Cuban Crisis and American television does not, however, extend to television news coverage of the crisis in the US. In 2002, the Paley Center for Media, formerly the Museum of Television and Radio,¹⁰³ brought together a panel of speakers to discuss the Cuban Missile Crisis and American television. In a prelude to a question, the then president of the organisation and panel host, Robert M. Batscha, highlighted two respects in which television affected the crisis, and vice-versa. He described it as "an early event in the public being able to follow a crisis [... and] in the White House using television in a crisis situation." Batscha then asked the panel:

¹⁰² Author's visit to exhibition "To the Brink" (Washington, D.C.), 12 November 2012.

¹⁰³ "Mission & History," The Paley Centre for Media, <https://www.paleycenter.org/about-mission-history-history/> (accessed 7 July 2017).

Could you assess how important television was from the point of view of communicating the crisis, from the point of view of policy, and from the point of view of where we were in the history of television news in covering events and what difference did it make?¹⁰⁴

In response to this and subsequent questions, all of the speakers played down the significance of television. Former UN correspondent for CBS, Richard C. Hottelet, stated that “the missile crisis was not a pictorial crisis [...] There were people who had things to say.” While acknowledging that there were pictures of the UN Security Council, this, he noted, was “a far cry of course from what we have today. The remotes, the satellites, the uplinks, the digital cameras and all the rest of it, didn’t exist.” Hottelet therefore believed “television figured [...] only marginally.” It was, he considered, principally a crisis for radio and the press, and as such, Hottelet suggested it did not play an important role in both covering and communicating the crisis.¹⁰⁵

Well-known former political reporter, Sander ‘Sandy’ Vanocur, concurred. A reporter for NBC News at the time of the crisis,¹⁰⁶ Vanocur recalled that the night of Kennedy’s address “was the only time all week I did a live spot.” This he did direct from the White House. In terms of communicating the crisis, Vanocur suggested therefore that apart from that single occasion, television was not of critical importance.¹⁰⁷

¹⁰⁴ “Media’s Role in the Cuban Missile Crisis,” The Paley Center for Media, <http://www.paleycenter.org/p-cuban-missile-crisis> (accessed 3 April 2014). The Paley Center uploaded this webpage in October 2012 for the fiftieth anniversary of the crisis. It contains a video clip from the panel discussion in 2002, from which the author transcribed the speakers’ comments.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid.

¹⁰⁶ “Sander Vanocur Biography (1928–),” Theatre, Film, and Television Biographies: Daniel J. Travanti to Dick Vitale, film reference, <http://www.filmreference.com/film/26/Sander-Vanocur.html> (accessed 4 April 2014).

¹⁰⁷ “Media’s Role in the Cuban Missile Crisis,” The Paley Center for Media, <http://www.paleycenter.org/p-cuban-missile-crisis> (accessed 3 April 2014).

This was the point of view even from within the White House. Batscha asked former journalist, and then Deputy Director of the US Information Agency (USIA), Donald M. Wilson: “What did you learn from inside the government about television coverage of this particular event? Did it change any behaviour?” Expressing his agreement with Hottelet and Vanocur, Wilson stated:

[T]elevision was not a major player at that time compared to what it shortly became just several years afterwards. And I remember being very concerned about how various matters would be reported but I certainly think I was more concerned about what the *New York Times* and the *Washington Post* would say, than I was about what television would say. It wasn’t that powerful then.¹⁰⁸

Wilson’s insight is invaluable. Not only did he hold a key position in the USIA, which was responsible for disseminating the Administration’s views to the public in other countries, but he was standing in for the ailing USIA Director and notable radio and television journalist, Edward R. Murrow.¹⁰⁹ The consensus amongst the panel, therefore, was that in terms of covering and communicating news on the crisis in the US, television was not the medium of critical importance when compared with radio and the press.

The role television played in news reporting on the crisis has received a more positive reception across the Atlantic. There were two television channels in the UK and both

¹⁰⁸ Ibid.

¹⁰⁹ “Donald M. Wilson” (Obituary), *Times* (Trenton, New Jersey), 11 December 2011, <http://obits.nj.com/obituaries/trenton/obituary.aspx?pid=155005033> (accessed 4 April 2014). For an excellent examination of Murrow and the Kennedy Administration, see Gregory M. Tomlin, *Murrow’s Cold War: Public Diplomacy for the Kennedy Administration* (Lincoln: Potomac Books, University of Nebraska Press, 2016). For more on Murrow, generally, see Robert William Pirsein, *The Voice of America: An History of the International Broadcasting Activities of the United States Government: 1940–1962* (New York: Arno Press, 1979), 421–2; and Alan L. Heil, Jr., *Voice of America: A History* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2003), 68–71.

broadcast news: the commercial channel, Independent Television Network (ITV), whose news programmes were provided by Independent Television News (ITN), and of course, the BBC. Although there were fluctuations, each attracted around half the audience share in the 1960s.¹¹⁰ According to former ITN chairman, David Nicholas, the Cuban Crisis revolutionised and legitimated television as a news medium.¹¹¹ In his career with ITN, Nicholas worked as a journalist, newsreader, producer, and editor, and eventually served as its editor-in-chief, chief executive, and chairman. In 2001, he was recognised with a Lifetime Achievement award by News World, an organisation including some of the most well-known and respected news outlets internationally. Reflecting on the 31 years he spent in the ITN newsroom, Nicholas averred that “there were only two stories that changed the world”: the Cuban Crisis and the collapse of the Berlin Wall in 1989. When the former occurred, he was an ITN journalist.¹¹² While Chairman of ITN, Nicholas told British broadcasting historians, Stuart Hood and Garret O’Leary, that

¹¹⁰ For more on the structure of British commercial television, see Stuart Hood and Garret O’Leary, *Questions of Broadcasting* (Great Britain: Methuen London, 1990), 24–6.

¹¹¹ *Ibid.*, 35–6.

¹¹² Patrick Fletcher, “The man behind the ITN story; Sir David Nicholas: a key thinker in the rise of television news,” *Western Mail* (Cardiff, Wales), <http://www.thefreelibrary.com/The+man+behind+the+ITN+story%3B+Sir+David+Nicholas%3A+a+key+thinker+in...-a080361533> (28 November 2001). The article erroneously referred to the Cuban Missile Crisis of 1963, not 1962.

television news really came of age with the Cuban missile crisis which was in 1962. First of all, it was a very pictorial issue in the sense that Kennedy in mobilising American forces and raising the issue in a dramatic radio and television speech said ‘Look, here are pictures of missile sites in Cuba’ and ‘Here are pictures taken by reconnaissance aircraft of rockets on the decks of Soviet freighters on their way to Havana’. That was an amazing week of huge international tension when the world faced the possibility of a nuclear exchange. It was a real crisis and it was moving so fast in the way that modern communications can with the exchange of notes between Moscow and Washington. Newspapers were almost out of date by the time they got loaded into the vans and television news — not just ITN but the BBC [(British Broadcasting Corporation)] as well and US television — was really up to the minute in those days showing the picture, showing what was happening, explaining what was going on. And people turned to television and said: ‘What’s happened since I saw the last news programme three hours ago?’ It seems to me that that was a moment of sudden puberty for television news when it ceased to be a kind of rather enhanced newsreel and turned into the place you go to first for the latest news.¹¹³

In that sense, television brought the Cuban Crisis to life for British viewers. As well as keeping viewers up to date with the unfolding situation, the imagery seemingly helped convey the gravity of the situation. The significance of television news reporting of this event was also recognised by official BBC historian, Jean Seaton, and former BBC television news and current affairs producer, Rosaleen Hughes, in their study of the BBC and the Cuban Crisis. Along with radio reports, television news, they asserted, provided “the most immediate and accurate source of information throughout the crisis since events moved so fast they had overtaken the newspaper reports before they hit the streets.” They noted that the immediacy and pictorial nature of the crisis was facilitated by the Telstar 1 satellite.¹¹⁴ Telstar 1 was the first privately financed space project sponsored by Bell Telephone Laboratories (then a division of the American Telephone

¹¹³ Hood and O’Leary, *Questions of Broadcasting*, 35–6.

¹¹⁴ Jean Seaton and Rosaleen Hughes, “The BBC and the Cuban missile crisis: Private worlds and public service,” in *An International History of the Cuban Missile Crisis: A 50-year retrospective*, David Gioe, Len Scott and Christopher Andrew, eds. Studies in Intelligence Series (Oxon: Routledge, 2014), 43 and 51.

and Telegraph Company (AT&T)) who also constructed the satellite, the British and French postal services, and the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA).¹¹⁵ Following its launch from Cape Canaveral, Florida, on 10 July 1962, Telstar 1 enabled a television signal to be sent across the Atlantic between North America and Europe.¹¹⁶ Although Telstar was only positioned to transmit images across the ocean for about 20 minutes per orbit (it took approximately two and a half hours to circle Earth), live television broadcasts were available to international audiences for the first time. It also enabled telephone calls and fax images to be relayed between the continents.¹¹⁷ The Cuban Crisis was the first significant international affair where news images were beamed instantly from the US. As Seaton and Hughes demonstrated, it was also “the first international crisis when television was indispensable to its understanding and an integral part of how the British public understood and reacted to it.”¹¹⁸

Clearly television played a part in the Cuban Crisis, and the crisis in the medium’s history. Hence, it is remembered as a television crisis. Given that the literature on the Cuban Crisis is dominated by US scholars and their perspectives, and much has also been written in relation to the UK, television has become a medium associated with Western state perspectives and memories of the crisis. However, in terms of its significance regarding news reporting on the crisis, the contrast between the American

¹¹⁵ Perry Vlahos, “Still in orbit: Telstar, the 50-year-old satellite and genesis of telecommunications for the masses,” *Sydney Morning Herald*, 12 July 2012, <http://www.smh.com.au/technology/sci-tech/still-in-orbit-telstar-the-50yearold-satellite-and-genesis-of-telecommunications-for-the-masses-20120711-21uhb.html> (accessed 9 April 2014).

¹¹⁶ Elizabeth Howell, “Telstar: Satellites Beamed 1st TV Signals Across the Sea,” *SPACE.com*, 12 February 2013, <http://www.space.com/19756-telstar.html> (accessed 9 April 2014).

¹¹⁷ Adam Mann, “Telstar 1: The Little Satellite That Created the Modern World 50 Years Ago,” *Wired*, 10 July 2012, <http://www.wired.com/2012/07/50th-anniversary-telstar-1/> (accessed 9 April 2014).

¹¹⁸ Seaton and Hughes, “The BBC and the Cuban missile crisis,” 43.

and British experiences is stark, particularly with respect to television news as a pictorial source of latest developments.

Where then can Australia's experience be located in this literature? What role did television play in Australian news reporting on the Cuban Crisis? It is difficult to assess the role, and thus significance, of television in Australian news reporting on the Cuban Crisis. Technical and archival limitations are decisive factors here, and cannot be understood without an outline of Australian television history.

Australia was slow to introduce television compared to the US and the UK, which began broadcasting in 1928 and 1936 respectively.¹¹⁹ The Great Depression, and in particular, World War II, delayed the development of the new medium in Australia. Its introduction seemingly was hampered by a lack of interest from the government, especially from Prime Minister Menzies. According to Tim Bowden, who has had a long association with the Australian Broadcasting Corporation (ABC) as an author, journalist, and broadcaster, Menzies "personally thought the whole concept of television was a vulgar abomination which Australia could well do without."¹²⁰ Years after

¹¹⁹ "Popular Australian television," Australian Government, <http://australia.gov.au/about-australia/australian-story/popular-austn-television> (accessed 12 April 2014).

¹²⁰ Tim Bowden with Wendy Borchers, *50 Years: Aunty's Jubilee! Celebrating 50 Years of ABC-TV* (Sydney: ABC Books, 2006), 14, 25, 30–1. For more on Bowden, see "Tim Bowden – Biographical Summary," Tim Bowden's Blog: Author, Journalist and Broadcaster, <http://www.timbowden.com.au/biography> (accessed 23 July 2014).

Australia had television, Menzies continued to hold it in considerable contempt, having written in a personal letter, the “medium is one I detest.”¹²¹

Television finally started in Australia in late 1956, just in time for the Olympic Games held in Melbourne that November. It was however, only available to residents of Melbourne and Sydney. It was estimated that just 5,000 black-and-white television sets had been purchased prior to the Games’ opening on 22 November.¹²² Only five percent of Melbourne households, and one percent of Sydney households, owned a television; a set then cost the average worker six to 10 weeks’ wages.¹²³ Thousands more experienced the new medium through department store windows.¹²⁴ By comparison, 50 percent of households in the US—where television was well-established—owned a television in 1955.¹²⁵ By 1959, approximately 60 percent of households in Melbourne and Sydney had television and watched it regularly.¹²⁶ By the Cuban Crisis in October 1962, television—only six years old—was well on its way to becoming an established medium in Australia. Every Australian capital city had television except Canberra and Darwin, where it did not arrive until late 1962 and 1971 respectively.¹²⁷

¹²¹ Menzies to Alfred Stirling, 14 October 1963, “Papers of Sir Robert Menzies, 1905–1978,” MS 4936/1/30/247 (manuscript), NLA, cited in A. W. Martin, *Robert Menzies: A Life, Volume 2, 1944–1978* (Carlton South, Victoria: Melbourne University Press, 1999), 473.

¹²² Bowden with Borchers, *50 Years: Aunty’s Jubilee!*, 14.

¹²³ “Popular Australian television,” Australian Government, <http://australia.gov.au/about-australia/australian-story/popular-austn-television> (accessed 12 April 2014).

¹²⁴ Bowden with Borchers, *50 Years: Aunty’s Jubilee!*, 14.

¹²⁵ *Ibid.*, 29.

¹²⁶ Colin Jones, *Something in the Air: A History of Radio in Australia* (Kenthurst, New South Wales: Kangaroo Press, 1995), 66.

¹²⁷ “Popular Australian television,” Australian Government, <http://australia.gov.au/about-australia/australian-story/popular-austn-television> (accessed 12 April 2014).

Whereas US television only involved commercial networks,¹²⁸ and British television consisted of a duopoly between the BBC and ITV,¹²⁹ Australian television—from its inception—reflected a mix of national and commercial broadcasting. At the time of the Cuban Crisis, viewers in Melbourne, Sydney, Brisbane and Adelaide each had a choice of three channels: the national broadcaster, the Australian Broadcasting Commission (now Corporation) (ABC); and two commercial networks. The ABC and one commercial network was available in both Perth and Hobart. In Canberra, television was only available on a commercial channel.¹³⁰ Ironically, the national capital was the last of these capital cities where an ABC television service was established. This occurred on 18 December 1962 and thus after the crisis had eased.¹³¹ In October 1962, the commercial networks had also established television stations in some major towns in regional areas in Australia's eastern states.¹³² The national broadcaster arrived later, with most Australian regional centres accessing the ABC television network between 1963 and 1966.¹³³ At the time, broadcasting across great distances within Australia was either difficult, or in some cases, impossible.

¹²⁸ See “TV History,” Archive of American Television, <http://www.emmytvlegends.org/resources/tv-history> (accessed 12 July 2017).

¹²⁹ Hood and O’Leary, *Questions of Broadcasting*, 35.

¹³⁰ In Melbourne, the ABC’s television station was ABV, and the commercial stations were HSV (channel 7) and GTV (channel 9). In Sydney, the ABC’s station was ABN, and the commercial stations were TCN (channel 9) and ATN (channel 7). In Brisbane, the ABC’s station was ABQ, and the commercial stations were BTQ (channel 7) and QTQ (channel 9). In Adelaide, the ABC’s station was ABS, and the commercial stations were ADS (channel 7) and NWS (channel 9). In Perth, the ABC’s station was ABW and the commercial station was TVW (channel 7). In Hobart, the ABC’s station was ABT, and the commercial stations were TVT (channel 6). In Canberra, there was one commercial network station, CTC (channel 7). All ABC stations operated on channel 2. Victoria and New South Wales each had additional commercial stations in four regional areas, and Queensland and Tasmania each had a further commercial station in one region: K. M. Archer, Commonwealth Statistician, and Commonwealth Bureau of Census and Statistics, *Official Year Book of the Commonwealth of Australia*, No. 48–1962 (Canberra: A. J. Arthur, Commonwealth Government Printer, 1962). See also Bowden with Borchers, *50 Years: Aunty’s Jubilee!*, 57 and 85; and “Timeline: 1950–1959,” Television.au, <http://televisionau.com/timeline/1950-1959> (accessed 12 April 2014).

¹³¹ The ABC’s television station in Canberra was ABC3. See Bowden with Borchers, *50 Years: Aunty’s Jubilee!*, 85.

¹³² See n.130.

¹³³ For a comprehensive list of ABC television service start dates and locations from 1960–66, see Bowden with Borchers, *50 Years: Aunty’s Jubilee!*, 85.

Temporary microwave links enabled live pictures to be sent from an Outside Broadcast (OB) van on location, but only where there was line-of-sight contact with the studio or direct contact with the transmission tower. Essentially, OB vans were mobile studios. When television commenced, the ABC had just two—one in Melbourne, the other in Sydney—which they used strategically to cover key events.¹³⁴ However, there was no terrestrial link between the states. That is, there was no permanent radio communication system connecting, for example, a television station in Melbourne with a transmitter in Sydney from which the Melbourne signal could be rebroadcasted, and vice-versa.¹³⁵ Such a network connecting all Australian states, which included major regional centres in addition to state capitals, was not established until July 1970.¹³⁶ Instead, news from Melbourne, such as highlights of the Olympic Games, was telerecorded and then flown to Sydney where it was aired, and distributed overseas.

Telerecording, also known as kinescoping, was a difficult and cumbersome process. It involved filming images on a television monitor from a fixed camera, which was synchronised with the television signal. The sound was recorded separately and later synchronised with the film. Although videotape machines that recorded better quality black-and-white images became available in Melbourne and Sydney in October 1961, and in all states by early 1962, telerecording continued up to the 1970s as the ABC

¹³⁴ See Bowden with Borchers, *50 Years: Aunty's Jubilee!*, 26.

¹³⁵ In later years, there were a few occasions where the ABC set-up temporarily a series of microwave links and repeaters to telecast significant events, including: the opening of Federal Parliament followed by a tour of the Governor-General's home, Yarralumla, broadcasted between Canberra and Sydney on 21 February 1959; the centenary of Australia's most famous horse race, the Melbourne Cup, broadcasted between Melbourne and Sydney, in conjunction with the commercial networks, on 5 November 1960; and for a number of sporting and other events broadcasted between Melbourne and Sydney from 24 December 1960 to 3 January 1961. See Bowden with Borchers, *50 Years: Aunty's Jubilee!*, 43 and 62.

¹³⁶ See Bowden with Borchers, *50 Years: Aunty's Jubilee!*, 135.

gradually introduced the machines where it had a television service. Their gradual introduction is perhaps attributable to the expense of the new technology—a videotape recorder then cost approximately \$100,000.00, and a 60-minute tape, \$200.00—and yet the reusability of the tape was considerably more cost effective than using film stock for telerecording.¹³⁷

Although the US and UK were first linked by satellite in 1962, it was not until June 1967 that Australia was able to receive satellite transmissions. The US Pacific Ocean ATS-B satellite enabled Australians to watch Expo '67 from Montreal, Canada.¹³⁸ While the wandering Intelsat II satellite, which had been misplaced into orbit, briefly enabled images and sound of the remote Western Australian town of Carnarvon to be broadcast to the UK directly via satellite in late 1966, this was “a one-way affair.” Australian viewers had to wait for the BBC telerecording to be flown over. Even though the programme was recorded live, it could not be watched by Western Australian viewers due to the absence of terrestrial links with Carnarvon.¹³⁹ Having had the new satellite technology for only six months, Australia broadcast live the memorial service for Prime Minister Harold Holt to the US, UK, Japan, and Pacific nations, as well as Europe via the Eurovision network.¹⁴⁰ But such satellite technology was not available in Australia in the early 1960s, specifically during the Cuban Crisis. This meant that, unlike the UK,

¹³⁷ Ibid., 22–5 and 82–5.

¹³⁸ Ibid., 115.

¹³⁹ The two programmes broadcast were *Down Under Comes Up Live* and *Our World*. In essence, the former was a rehearsal for the latter, a BBC project aimed to show life unfolding in real time in 30 countries connected by a network of satellites. Carnarvon, the location of Australia's first earth station and home to a 13-metre-diameter dish on Brown's Range, was the only site from where the images could be sent. See Bowden with Borchers, *50 Years: Aunty's Jubilee!*, 104, 107, 115 and 119.

¹⁴⁰ See Bowden with Borchers, *50 Years: Aunty's Jubilee!*, 122.

Australian viewers were unable to receive instantly televised news stories from the US, nor the UK or elsewhere for that matter. As such, the Cuban Crisis did not play out on Australian television as a live event. While the event was nonetheless dramatic, it is unlikely that Australian television would have had the impact that British scholars and industry personnel have described, as outlined earlier.

In the era before satellites in Australia, films and telerecordings had to be flown in from overseas, and just like Australian-produced programmes, transported around the country. Consequently, there was delay. According to the well-known Australian current affairs journalist and producer, Ken Chown,¹⁴¹ many television news items were two or three days old, sometimes older, at the time of broadcast.¹⁴² In the words of another journalist, it was “ancient history compared to newspapers and radio.”¹⁴³

As films and telerecordings of programmes had to be transported, rather than beamed, to and around Australia, ABC television services relied heavily on local content.¹⁴⁴ However, this was not the case with television news. The major stories of the day in ABC radio news bulletins had to be mirrored in the television news of all states regardless of the local content those services wanted to televise. This was ordered by the Editor-in-Chief of the ABC news service, and later Controller of News, W.S. (Wally)

¹⁴¹ See Brian Davies, “TV producer ushered in a new era of journalism,” *Sydney Morning Herald*, 31 October 2013, <http://www.smh.com.au/comment/obituaries/tv-producer-ushered-in-a-new-era-of-journalism-20131030-2wgw9.html> (accessed 19 June 2014).

¹⁴² See Bowden with Borchers, *50 Years: Aunty's Jubilee!*, 36.

¹⁴³ Mann, “Telstar 1.”

¹⁴⁴ See Bowden with Borchers, *50 Years: Aunty's Jubilee!*, 62.

Hamilton, who was concerned to uphold “national” news values.¹⁴⁵ The introduction of the telecommunications network in July 1970 connecting all Australian states made national news broadcasting all the more possible.¹⁴⁶ It is likely that the Cuban Crisis would have dominated ABC and commercial television news bulletins like it did ABC radio, as discussed in the next section.

Despite the availability of telerecording, in particular, to capture and preserve programme material, no recordings of Australian television news bulletins or stories relating to the Cuban Crisis produced by the national or commercial television broadcasters could be located.¹⁴⁷ Catalogue searches of the Australia’s National Film and Sound Archive gleaned no results, and the National Archives of Australia’s Sydney Reading Room, which holds numerous ABC records, have no such records in their custody.¹⁴⁸ Furthermore, the Sydney and Melbourne-based libraries of the Seven Network and Nine Network—the only two commercial television networks in existence at that time—likewise do not possess such records.¹⁴⁹ According to Joe Varga, who has worked in the archives department of the Seven Network for 40 years, “Off air daily news was not considered important enough to warrant an expensive recording

¹⁴⁵ Ibid., 36–7.

¹⁴⁶ Ibid., 135.

¹⁴⁷ “Off-airs” is the industry term for such recordings. An off-air is a recording of what went to air—the news presenter, stories, footage shown, commercials, et cetera—as one discrete show. Essentially, it is what an individual could capture today if they recorded a television news bulletin on their home recorder: Archives Division, Nine Network, email to author, 10 January 2014.

¹⁴⁸ The ABC Archives were not consulted in the course of this research; its older records are available through the National Archives of Australia and the daily fee charged to visitors was beyond the budget for this research: “Frequently Asked Questions,” *ABC Archives*, <http://www.abc.net.au/archives/contact.htm> (accessed 12 July 2017). This is, nevertheless, a possible avenue for future research.

¹⁴⁹ Caroline Rush, Seven Network, telephone conversation with author, 13 January 2014; Caroline Rush, Seven Network, emails to author, 13–16 January 2014; Jenny Allen, Nine Network, telephone conversation with author, 10 January 2014; and Archives Division, Nine Network, emails to author, 10 and 15 January 2014.

process.”¹⁵⁰ Telerecording, he stated, was the only process available. It was clumsy and expensive, and thus reserved for “only very important programs,” explained Varga. Although videotape machines were introduced the year before the Cuban Crisis, Varga claimed they were “not around” until the late 1960s and “videotape was very expensive.”¹⁵¹ This suggests that while two \$100,000.00 machines may have been within the national broadcaster’s budget, they were not within the Seven Network’s. Hence, only significant programmes were recorded; news bulletins were not considered significant.

The archivist at the Nine Network also suggested that the recording process and the time and cost associated with it, explained the absence of off-airs of the news in this period. The news was a live broadcast, during which the presenter would throw to filmed segments. Telerecording used film, which could only be exposed once. “If you had the film stories why film them again and the newsreader?” the archivist asked rhetorically.¹⁵² This indicates that telerecording news bulletins was an unnecessary and potentially costly exercise in terms of film stock.

However, some short segments of film on the Cuban Crisis produced by foreign broadcasters are available in Australian archives. Australian television broadcasters would receive such footage as a small roll of film from Visnews or other foreign news

¹⁵⁰ Joe Varga via Caroline Rush, email to author, 16 January 2014. This remained the case for the next 30 years; the Seven Network only has complete television news bulletins from 1994 onwards: Rush to author, 14 January 2014. The Nine Network confirmed they do not have off-airs of the news from 1962: Archives Division, Nine Network, to author, 10 January 2014.

¹⁵¹ Varga via Rush to author, 16 January 2014.

¹⁵² Archives Division, Nine Network, to author, 15 January 2014.

providers, which they could play during their bulletins, using either the original voiceover or their own over the top. Some footage acquired by the ABC, and now held by the National Archives of Australia (NAA), is available, for example, Soviet First Deputy Premier Anastas I. Mikoyan's flight to Cuba to meet with Fidel Castro regarding the crisis, as well as his meeting with US Ambassador to the UN, Adlai Stevenson.¹⁵³ Summaries of footage received, but not archived, are also available, including an excerpt of President Kennedy's national address, and a six-minute background to the Cuban Crisis complete with shot list.¹⁵⁴ The Nine Network archivist stated that news recordings from the early 1970s use such vision sparingly, sometimes simply a map with a voiceover.¹⁵⁵ It is therefore unlikely that film segments were used more regularly a decade earlier. As films were flown in from overseas and delay was inevitable, perhaps such footage was often no longer newsworthy on its arrival, a factor which would have been exacerbated by the fast-moving pace of the Cuban Crisis. However, it is not possible to determine if, when, or how they may have been aired in news bulletins. Although ABC television logs containing daily operations sheets are available for this this period, they do not record such information.¹⁵⁶ Furthermore, the Nine Network does not have scripts or transcripts dating back to 1962.¹⁵⁷ Television news broadcasts on the crisis therefore seemingly came and went as quickly as the crisis itself. While "Television hit radio like a vigorous water plant taking over a pond," to

¹⁵³ For the footage, see NAA, Sydney: "CUBA segments ex ABC film," Disc 1, "INZ8431-Mikoyan and Stevenson." For a textual summary of the footage, see NAA, Sydney: SP1198/2SP1198/2/0, WOB 53, Box 53, INZ. 7301-INZ. 9000, TV News, INZ8401-INZ8500, "Meeting of Mikoyan and Stevenson and Mikoyan Departure for Cuba," uncatalogued. Box 53 contained numerous other textual summaries of footage that is unavailable.

¹⁵⁴ NAA, Sydney: Visnews by BCINA, Source: NBC News, "President Kennedy's Speech on Cuban Blockade," New York, 23 October 1962, uncatalogued; and Visnews by BCINA, Source: Visnews, "US [*sic*] Cuban Conflict – Background Scenes," London, 23 October 1962, 1–3, uncatalogued.

¹⁵⁵ Archives Division, Nine Network, to author, 10 January 2014.

¹⁵⁶ NAA, Sydney: SP638, B16, ABN TV logs, 19 October–30 November 1962, uncatalogued.

¹⁵⁷ Archives Division, Nine Network, to author, 10 January 2014.

quote an historian of radio in Australia,¹⁵⁸ as shown below, the latter remained an important and regular source of news.

Radio and the Crisis

Technological and programme changes in the late 1950s to early 1960s emphasised the importance of news to radio broadcasting. The introduction of tape-recording, which enabled interviews to be recorded and aired during programmes, and short news bulletins on the hour, ensured that news radio was innovative and regularly accessible to listeners. Most newspapers only published daily editions, and television was available for several hours a day. In contrast, six Australian radio stations operated a 24-hour service by 1962. With approximately 97 percent of households in Australia's capital cities owning a radio in 1955, it was clearly a popular medium through which Australians kept themselves entertained and informed.¹⁵⁹ For many Australians, it would have been an important source for regular and up to date news reports on the Cuban Crisis.

ABC radio first reported news of the potential for a Cuban Crisis on Monday 22 October 1962 at 9:00 p.m. on station 2FC. The news presenter stated that, according to the BBC correspondent in Washington D.C., there were rumours there of "a possible crisis over Cuba" following Kennedy's decision to abruptly end his election tour and return to the White House. Rusk had likewise cancelled an "out-of-town engagement"

¹⁵⁸ Jones, *Something in the Air*, 66.

¹⁵⁹ Jones, *Something in the Air*, 66, 68, 70, 78–9.

and American service chiefs had been requested to remain in the capital. While “big movements of American marines” were observed in Florida, the Department of Defense stated that these were in relation to annual exercises. Earlier in the bulletin, it was reported that a commando group of exiled Cubans named Alpha 66 threatened to sink British merchant ships trading with Cuba and spotted in Cuban territorial waters.¹⁶⁰ Local news and two other overseas stories—the India-China border dispute and a Norwegian shipwreck—were of greater newsworthiness, Cuba being the eighth of twelve national news item read in that bulletin.¹⁶¹ There was no mention of Cuba in the subsequent and final ABC radio news bulletin for that night.¹⁶²

At 6:00 a.m. the following morning, 23 October 1962, Kennedy was the lead national news story on ABC radio station 2FC. The news presenter announced that at 9:00 a.m., Kennedy would deliver a national radio and television broadcast on “a subject of the highest national urgency.” The subject was unknown but there were reports, he stated, that “some new action against Cuba—possibly a blockade—is contemplated.” Kennedy’s Press Secretary, Pierre Salinger, would not elaborate on the broadcast but told reporters that the President had had conversations with Rusk, Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara, former US Ambassador to Moscow, Llewellyn Thompson, and

¹⁶⁰ NAA, Sydney: SP641/1, WOB 68, ABC radio (2FC) transcript of national news bulletin with annotations, 22 October 1962, 9:00 p.m. Regarding British trade and shipping to Cuba in this period, see Guto Rhys Thomas, “Trade and Shipping to Cuba 1961–1963: An Irritant in Anglo-American Relations,” (PhD diss., University of Wales, Aberystwyth, 2001).

¹⁶¹ NAA, Sydney: SP641/1, WOB 68, ABC radio (2FC) transcript of national news bulletin with annotations, 22 October 1962, 9:00 p.m.

¹⁶² *Ibid.*, 10:30 p.m.

Director of the Administration's Berlin Task Force, Martin Hillenbrand.¹⁶³ The urgency of the subject matter, suspicions over Cuba and a blockade, and Kennedy's discussions with these particular senior officials, indicated to thoughtful listeners that a significant foreign policy issue had arisen for the US.

That Kennedy's broadcast "may deal with a major matter of overall foreign policy," was in fact reported by the ABC in its next radio news bulletin. This bulletin, which aired on 2FC only 45 minutes later, was much more detailed.¹⁶⁴ Previously, the news presenter had simply said that Kennedy would deliver a national radio and television broadcast. But in this bulletin, he stated "President Kennedy has asked all radio and television stations in the United States to cancel their normal programs to allow him to broadcast."¹⁶⁵ By stipulating that Kennedy required every American radio and television network to broadcast his address and the effect this would have on their programming, the seriousness of his speech was greatly emphasised. The gravity of the situation was underscored by the report that congressional leaders who were in the midst of election campaigning had been summoned back to Washington D.C. and a fleet of Air Force jets would facilitate their return. It was reported that stock markets in New York, London, Montreal, and elsewhere had fallen dramatically. Suspicions that the matter involved Cuba were repeated. It was announced in this news bulletin that ambassadors from North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and South American states were called to

¹⁶³ Ibid., 23 October 1962, 6:00 a.m. For more on Hillenbrand's appointments, see Wolfgang Saxon, "Martin J. Hillenbrand, 89, Expert on European Affairs, Is Dead," *New York Times*, 18 February 2005, <http://www.nytimes.com/2005/02/18/obituaries/martin-j-hillenbrand-89-expert-on-european-affairs-is-dead.html> (accessed 7 July 2017).

¹⁶⁴ NAA, Sydney: SP641/1, WOB 68, ABC radio (2FC) transcript of national news bulletin with annotations, 23 October 1962, 6:45 a.m.

¹⁶⁵ Ibid.

the State Department.¹⁶⁶ While ambassadors from other states, including Australia, were also called to the State Department, this was not reported. The situation was therefore portrayed as one that would only affect South American states and US allies in Europe. Correspondents were reported as having said that Kennedy's upcoming address and its mysteriousness had brought "an air of wartime tension to Washington." The US Navy had since cancelled its Caribbean exercise—a mock assault of Puerto Rico and other manoeuvres—involving 40 ships and 20,000 marines, 6,000 of which were to storm ashore.¹⁶⁷ Such an exercise would have required significant logistical planning. Thus its cancellation would not have been taken lightly and would have exacerbated the sense of tension. Importantly, it signalled the increased availability of the US Navy. This news bulletin—rebroadcast at 7:15 a.m. on 2BL and at 7:45 a.m. on 2FC—was the last to air prior to Kennedy's address.¹⁶⁸

As noted, it was 9:00 a.m. on 23 October 1962 on Australia's east coast when Kennedy delivered his address. The Voice of America (VOA), the US government shortwave radio service under the auspices of the USIA, transmitted the President's speech as a "special worldwide broadcast."¹⁶⁹ The USIA ordered the VOA to broadcast around-the-clock in Spanish and mount saturation coverage in English to the Americas and the rest of the world. VOA therefore enabled Kennedy to address an international, as well as a

¹⁶⁶ Ibid.

¹⁶⁷ Ibid.

¹⁶⁸ NAA, Sydney: SP641/1, WOB 68, ABC radio (2BL) transcript of national news bulletin, 23 October 1962, 7:15 a.m.; and NAA, Sydney: SP641/1, WOB 68, ABC radio (2FC) transcript of national news bulletin with annotations, 23 October 1962, 7:45 a.m.

¹⁶⁹ NAA, Sydney, C102, 1499944, ABC Sydney recording, "President Kennedy Speech to the World on the Cuban Missile Crisis," 23 October 1962. For discussion on the USIA, VOA and Cuba, specifically the Bay of Pigs invasion and the Cuban Missile Crisis, see Heil, *Voice of America*, 68–71.

national, audience on the Cuban situation, including Australian listeners.¹⁷⁰ The ABC in Sydney recorded Kennedy's address in its entirety, complete with opening and closing remarks from the Voice of America reporter at the White House.¹⁷¹ While the extent to which the broadcast was incorporated into ABC radio programming is unclear, it is likely that Australian listeners heard Kennedy live on their radio sets. This is indicated by the emphasis in ABC radio news bulletins, as detailed above, that the President would deliver his address at 9:00 a.m. Furthermore, as noted earlier, only significant material was recorded. The fact that the ABC recorded Kennedy's address demonstrates its significance at that time and to Australian broadcasting history. So significant was President Kennedy's broadcast that it was the only story reported on ABC radio in the subsequent news bulletin at 10:00 a.m. on 2BL.¹⁷²

Read All About It: Australian Newspaper Reporting on Kennedy's Impending Address

In addition to television and radio, newspapers alerted Australians to the Cuban Crisis and kept them informed of its developments. In their final editions on 22 October 1962, the Melbourne *Herald* and the Adelaide *News* were the first Australian newspapers to report on speculation that an international crisis possibly involving Cuba was

¹⁷⁰ Australia may have also attempted to reach an international audience, particularly its Asia-Pacific neighbours, through its shortwave radio service, Radio Australia, which was then under the auspices of the ABC. At the time of the Cuban Crisis, it broadcast for 21.5 hours a day and claimed to be "the most listened to overseas shortwave broadcast service in the world": "You are a Good Neighbour with the ABC," *Advertiser* (Adelaide), advertisement, 23 October 1962, 6. For more on Radio Australia and its use as a weapon during the Cold War, see Errol Hodge, *Radio Wars: Truth, Propaganda and the Struggle for Radio Australia* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1995).

¹⁷¹ NAA, Sydney: C102, 1499944, ABC Sydney recording, "President Kennedy Speech to the World on the Cuban Missile Crisis," 23 October 1962.

¹⁷² NAA, Sydney: SP641/1, WOB 68, ABC radio (2BL) transcript of national news bulletin with annotations, 23 October 1962, 10:00 a.m.

developing. Both newspapers reported that such speculation stemmed from the concentration in recent days of Air, Naval, and Marine forces in Florida and the Caribbean, and the naval manoeuvres there. Kennedy's premature return to Washington because of a slight cold also aroused suspicion. The *News* observed that Kennedy appeared to be making "a surprisingly quick recovery" and consequently, "there was speculation as to whether his cold had been treated as a 'diplomatic illness' to cover some official need" to return to the capital. It described his return as one reason for "the sense of excitement which seized Washington." The *Herald* noted that Administration officials, such as Rusk, were at their desks that day and the Defense Department was "unusually staffed." While the *News* stated that the White House declined to comment on reports of a "'tense' new" Cuban situation, the *Herald* wrote that "a disclosure of some kind" from the White House was expected that day (22 October 1962 in the US).¹⁷³

News of a potential crisis involving Cuba was reported by Australia's other daily metropolitan newspapers the following day, 23 October 1962. The Adelaide *Advertiser* and the Brisbane *Courier-Mail* both quoted New York's *Daily News*, which had already referred to the situation as a "Cuban crisis."¹⁷⁴ Besides the *Herald* and the *News*, the *Sydney Morning Herald* was the only other newspaper to report that a slight cold was the official reason given for Kennedy's abrupt return to Washington.¹⁷⁵ It was also the

¹⁷³ "Marine movements start 'buzz': Cuba Crisis Rumors [*sic*] in the U.S.," *Herald*, 22 October 1962, 6; and Raymond Kerrison, "Action on Cuba: Tight U.S. ship curbs," *News*, 22 October 1962, 2.

¹⁷⁴ "Crisis Talks in Washington," *Advertiser*, 23 October 1962, 3; and "Kennedy holds crisis talks over Cuba—or?," *Courier-Mail*, 23 October 1962, 4.

¹⁷⁵ "Kennedy Plans Vital Statement On 'Crisis' Talks," *Sydney Morning Herald*, 23 October 1962, 1. See also "Marine movements start 'buzz': Cuba Crisis Rumors [*sic*] in the U.S.," *Herald*, 22 October 1962, 6; and Raymond Kerrison, "Action on Cuba: Tight U.S. ship curbs," *News*, 22 October 1962, 2.

only newspaper in addition to the *Herald* to report that key Administration officials were at their desks and the Defense Department was “unusually well-staffed.”¹⁷⁶

In similar vein to the *Herald* and the *News*, all of the other daily metropolitan newspapers reported on the continuing US naval manoeuvres in the Caribbean, suggesting that this was linked with a possible crisis over Cuba. The *Enterprise*, the US Navy’s nuclear-powered and newest “supercarrier”, was spotted heading south in the Atlantic even though it was not in the original list of ships participating in the naval exercise, reported the Hobart *Examiner*, implying doubt over whether this was in fact an exercise.¹⁷⁷ Reports in the Melbourne *Sun*, the *Advertiser*, and the Hobart *Mercury* that a warships tour for reporters was abruptly cancelled by the US Navy would have furthered suspicion.¹⁷⁸ The *Sydney Morning Herald* was the only newspaper besides the *News* to report on the movements, and concentration, of Marines in the US South, which it stated were “believed to be connected with the Cuban situation.”¹⁷⁹ Nonetheless, each newspaper noted that US officials had denied that the exercise was in relation to Cuba. Furthermore, almost all newspapers made much of the report that in Key West, Florida, which is in close proximity to Cuba, an air control tower that was

¹⁷⁶ “From Page 1: “Crisis” Talks by Top U.S. Officials,” *Sydney Morning Herald*, 23 October 1962, 3; and “Marine movements start ‘buzz’: Cuba Crisis Rumors [sic] in the U.S.,” *Herald*, 22 October 1962, 6.

¹⁷⁷ “U.S. on Verge of Cuban Action?” *Examiner*, 23 October 1962, 1.

¹⁷⁸ “The big Washington mystery..,” *Sun*, 23 October 1962, 7; “Stop Press: President to Speak,” *Advertiser*, 23 October 1962, 1; and “American Signs Point to Fresh Crisis,” *Mercury*, 23 October 1962, 3.

¹⁷⁹ “Kennedy Plans Vital Statement On ‘Crisis’ Talks,” *Sydney Morning Herald*, 23 October 1962, 1; “From Page 1: “Crisis” Talks by Top U.S. Officials,” *Sydney Morning Herald*, 23 October 1962, 3; and Raymond Kerrison, “Action on Cuba: Tight U.S. ship curbs,” *News*, 22 October 1962, 2.

hurriedly built was operational, ostensibly to manage a heavy increase in air traffic.¹⁸⁰ It was also reported that at nearby Boca Chica naval air station, military leave had been cancelled and a battalion of marines had arrived.¹⁸¹ As the *Sun* put it, “unusual numbers” of uniformed men were spotted throughout the Florida Keys.¹⁸² The *Perth West Australian* concluded its article by suggesting that the situation was either legitimate or that the US was exaggerating. Quoting the *New York Herald Tribune*, it stated “Either something very big is brewing or the Kennedy Administration wants to give the impression that it is.”¹⁸³

In addition to the movements of marines in the Caribbean, the descent of officials on Washington, including the President, would have indicated a problem was looming for the US. While only two newspapers in addition to the *Herald* and the *News* mentioned Kennedy’s return to Washington from his election campaign tour,¹⁸⁴ most reported that the White House had recalled some top Congressional leaders to the capital.¹⁸⁵ Reports that the US was formulating a new foreign policy were also reported. In an attempt to

¹⁸⁰ “Cuban Exile Group Threatens to Sink British Ships,” *Age*, 23 October 1962, 4; “Cuba Exiles Sail on the British!” *Sun*, 23 October 1962, 7; “Crisis Talks in Washington,” *Advertiser*, 23 October 1962, 3; “Airport busy — Cuba link?” *Courier-Mail*, 23 October 1962, 1; “American Signs Point to Fresh Crisis,” *Mercury*, 23 October 1962, 3; and “U.S. on Verge of Cuban Action?” *Examiner*, 23 October 1962, 1.

¹⁸¹ “Cuban Exile Group Threatens to Sink British Ships,” *Age*, 23 October 1962, 4; “Cuba Exiles Sail on the British!” *Sun*, 23 October 1962, 7; “U.S. on Verge of Cuban Action?” *Examiner*, 23 October 1962, 1; “Crisis Talks in Washington,” *Advertiser*, 23 October 1962, 3; and “Airport busy — Cuba link?” *Courier-Mail*, 23 October 1962, 1. Only the *Advertiser* and the *Courier-Mail* reported the cancellation of military leave.

¹⁸² “Cuba Exiles Sail on the British!” *Sun*, 23 October 1962, 7.

¹⁸³ “Exiles Sail to Sink U.K. Shipping,” *West Australian*, 23 October 1962, 1.

¹⁸⁴ “Crisis Calls To Capital,” *Canberra Times*, 23 October 1962, 1; and “Kennedy Plans Vital Statement On ‘Crisis’ Talks,” *Sydney Morning Herald*, 23 October 1962, 1.

¹⁸⁵ “Crisis Calls To Capital,” *Canberra Times*, 23 October 1962, 1; “The big Washington mystery..,” *Sun*, 23 October 1962, 7; “Kennedy Plans Vital Statement On ‘Crisis’ Talks,” *Sydney Morning Herald*, 23 October 1962, 1; “Stop Press: President to Speak,” *Advertiser*, 23 October 1962, 1; “American Signs Point to Fresh Crisis,” *Mercury*, 23 October 1962, 3; and “U.S. on Verge of Cuban Action?” *Examiner*, 23 October 1962, 1.

demonstrate the credibility of such reports, the *Canberra Times* and the *Sun* wrote that Congressional leaders are typically informed of, and consulted on, new foreign policy initiatives in advance by the President, suggesting that this was the reason for their recall.¹⁸⁶ However, the issue that seemed to arouse the most suspicion was the weekend, and supposedly secret, meetings in Washington of top officials, which every newspaper, except for the *Herald* and the *News*, reported. The *Sydney Morning Herald* wrote that it was unofficially reported that Kennedy had called the National Security Council into session for that day (22 October 1962 in the US). The “unprecedented” nature of these meetings for this Administration, in terms of their frequency and timing, was emphasised.¹⁸⁷ As such, each newspaper reported that a clarifying statement from the White House was expected, and “within hours” according to the *Canberra Times* and the *Mercury*.¹⁸⁸ However, only the *Sydney Morning Herald* and the *Advertiser* reported that such a statement would come from the President, who would deliver “a televised speech tonight [22 October 1962 in the US] on a subject of the ‘highest national urgency’.” The *Sydney Morning Herald* stated that the White House requested television networks for 30 minutes of broadcasting at 7:00 p.m. EST for the President. Additionally, it noted that reporters had been told to standby for possible further

¹⁸⁶ “Crisis Calls To Capital,” *Canberra Times*, 23 October 1962, 1; “The big Washington mystery..,” *Sun*, 23 October 1962, 7; “Stop Press: President to Speak,” *Advertiser*, 23 October 1962, 1; “American Signs Point to Fresh Crisis,” *Mercury*, 23 October 1962, 3; and “U.S. on Verge of Cuban Action?” *Examiner*, 23 October 1962, 1.

¹⁸⁷ “Kennedy Plans Vital Statement On ‘Crisis’ Talks,” *Sydney Morning Herald*, 23 October 1962, 1; “Crisis Calls To Capital,” *Canberra Times*, 23 October 1962, 1; “President Holds ‘Crisis’ Talks,” *Age*, 23 October 1962, 3; “The big Washington mystery..,” *Sun*, 23 October 1962, 7; “Crisis Talks in Washington,” *Advertiser*, 23 October 1962, 3; “Kennedy holds crisis talks over Cuba – or ?” *Courier-Mail*, 23 October 1962, 4; “Exiles Sail to Sink U.K. Shipping,” *West Australian*, 23 October 1962, 1; “American Signs Point to Fresh Crisis,” *Mercury*, 23 October 1962, 3; and “U.S. on Verge of Cuban Action?” *Examiner*, 23 October 1962, 1. While the *Canberra Times* reported on the meetings, no reference was made to their “unprecedented” or secret nature.

¹⁸⁸ *Ibid.* This was also reported the day before in the *Herald*: “Marine movements start ‘buzz’: Cuba Crisis Rumors in the U.S.,” *Herald*, 22 October 1962, 6.

announcements prior to Kennedy's meetings and address.¹⁸⁹ Interestingly, both the *Sydney Morning Herald* and the *Advertiser* referred to Kennedy's *televised* address and neither acknowledged that it would also be broadcast on radio. Again, this highlights the importance of, and emphasis on, television as a news medium and to the Cuban Crisis.

The *Sydney Morning Herald* and the *Courier-Mail* were the only newspapers that quoted the insightful reports of the New York *Herald-Tribune* on the potential reasons for the impending crisis:

Perhaps the Kennedy Administration had found that Cuba has acquired offensive military capability. President Kennedy said on September 13 that if this happens the United States would take some action. The President wants to demonstrate American ability to handle a two-front crisis.¹⁹⁰

References were then made to the extensive US naval manoeuvres in the Caribbean, and the *Herald-Tribune* was quoted as having stated that Kennedy may "want to execute a similar manoeuvre involving Berlin."¹⁹¹ Just as the *Examiner* implied, mentioned earlier, these newspapers too doubted whether such manoeuvres were in fact an exercise, suggesting they may even be a trial run.

¹⁸⁹ "Kennedy Plans Vital Statement On 'Crisis' Talks," *Sydney Morning Herald*, 23 October 1962, 1; and "Stop Press: President to Speak," *Advertiser*, 23 October 1962, 1.

¹⁹⁰ "Kennedy Plans Vital Statement On 'Crisis' Talks," *Sydney Morning Herald*, 23 October 1962, 1. See also "Kennedy holds crisis talks over Cuba – or?" *Courier-Mail*, 23 October 1962, 4. The *Advertiser* was the only other newspaper to refer to the comments of the *Herald-Tribune*, but only in regard to Cuba's possible offensive missile capability: "Crisis Talks in Washington," *Advertiser*, 23 October 1962, 3.

¹⁹¹ "Kennedy Plans Vital Statement On 'Crisis' Talks," *Sydney Morning Herald*, 23 October 1962, 1; and "Kennedy holds crisis talks over Cuba – or?" *Courier-Mail*, 23 October 1962, 4.

Rumours have been current for a couple of days that Cuba is in the process of acquiring medium range missiles and bombers. One unconfirmed report was that Cubans are building emplacements for a 1400-mile-range rocket. Another unconfirmed report is that Russia is giving Cuba IL-28 twin-jet Eagle bombers with a 1,400-mile range.¹

It would only be a matter of hours before President Kennedy would confirm such reports, noting that this materiel was already in Cuba. Despite a clamp down on news contacts and sources,² the *Herald Tribune*, and therefore the *Sydney Morning Herald* and the *Courier-Mail*, had demonstrated foresight and accuracy in their news reporting. Noting that although “a major decision over Cuba is looming,” the *Sydney Morning Herald* was the only newspaper to report that the situation could involve “unexpected developments” over Berlin, demonstrating it was acutely aware of the volatile issues in American-Soviet relations.³

Typical with all newspaper reporting, some news outlets were better at keeping their readers informed about the crisis than others. As outlined above, readers of the Melbourne *Herald* and the Adelaide *News* were the first to be notified on 22 October 1962 that a possible crisis over Cuba was afoot. The *Advertiser* continued to keep Adelaide residents updated when it reported the following day that the President would deliver a national address on the situation. However, it is clear from this newspaper review that the *Sydney Morning Herald* provided the most comprehensive reporting on

¹ “Kennedy Plans Vital Statement On ‘Crisis’ Talks,” *Sydney Morning Herald*, 23 October 1962, 1. See also “Kennedy holds crisis talks over Cuba – or ?” *Courier-Mail*, 23 October 1962, 4.

² See “Kennedy Plans Vital Statement On ‘Crisis’ Talks,” *Sydney Morning Herald*, 23 October 1962, 1; and “Crisis Calls To Capital,” *Canberra Times*, 23 October 1962, 1.

³ “Kennedy Plans Vital Statement On ‘Crisis’ Talks,” *Sydney Morning Herald*, 23 October 1962, 1.

the situation. Its Sydney readership would have benefited from its up to date coverage, particularly the details of Kennedy's address and reports of its possible subject matter.

However, this survey also demonstrates that by the time they were read, Australian newspapers contained old news. For example, as detailed in the previous section, ABC radio news reported on 23 October 1962 at 6:00 a.m. that Kennedy would deliver an address that would be broadcast on television and radio. That morning, this was reported in just two newspapers, and only the *Sydney Morning Herald* was able to specify its timing. All of the other newspapers simply wrote that a statement from the White House was anticipated. Furthermore, while the newspapers made much of the *continuing* US naval exercise in the Caribbean, ABC radio news reported on 23 October 1962 at 6:45 a.m. it had been cancelled. The claim of former ITN chairman, David Nicholas, quoted previously, that "Newspapers were almost out of date by the time they got loaded into the vans,"⁴ therefore resonates with Australian newspaper reporting on the crisis. Cognisant of the pace at which the crisis was unfolding, the *Sydney Morning Herald* published an advertisement encouraging readers to tune into station 2GB for more regular updates:

⁴ Hood and O'Leary, *Questions of Broadcasting*, 36.

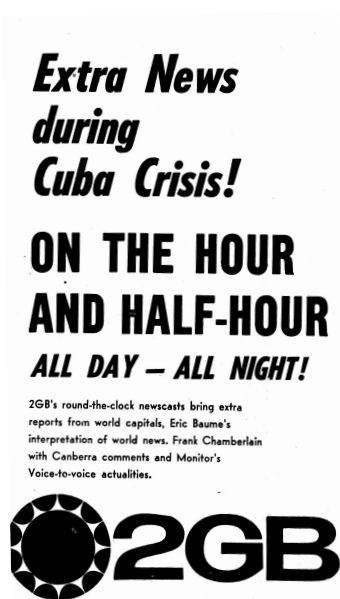


Illustration 1: *Sydney Morning Herald*, 25 October 1962, 4.

With regards to newspaper reporting, the situation was most dire for Darwin residents. Darwin's metropolitan newspaper, the *Northern Territory News*, was published tri-weekly. While it published an edition on 23 October 1962, the day that news of the crisis broke, the situation in Cuba was not mentioned. The subsequent edition on 25 October 1962 contained only a single reference to the Cuban Crisis, which appeared in the newspaper's editorial. It stated: "If the utter disaster of nuclear war is avoided over the Cuban issue, we may well breath [*sic*] a sigh of relief. But the warning note to the very near north can't be ignored."¹ While the *Northern Territory News* reported on international affairs, it concentrated on issues affecting Australia's region, especially those close to the Territory's border, and as such, the Cuban Crisis almost went unreported. Interestingly, the editorial comment shows that the *Northern Territory News* assumed that its readers knew about the crisis, even though it did not report on it. In

¹ "Editorial: Time to Take Stock — Fast," *Northern Territory News*, 25 October 1962, 6.

light of this limited newspaper reporting, and given it would be some time before television would be available in the Northern Territory, Darwin residents, it seems, relied heavily on radio to keep themselves abreast of current affairs, possibly more so than those elsewhere in Australia. Compared to the *Northern Territory News*, daily, and not tri-weekly, newspapers were available in regional areas throughout Australia, and provided comprehensive coverage of the Cuban Crisis.² The subject of subsequent newspaper reporting was Kennedy's address on the Cuban Crisis alongside statements in Parliament from Australia's Prime Minister and Opposition leader.

The First Australian Parliamentary Statements on the Crisis

Politicians had gathered in Canberra on 23 October 1962 as the Commonwealth Parliament of Australia was sitting.³ Following prayers, Question Time was the first order of business when the House of Representatives went into session at 2:30 p.m. "International Affairs," specifically the Cuban Crisis, was the focus of the opening question. Leader of the Opposition and leader of the Australian Labor Party (ALP), Arthur Calwell MP, directed a question without notice to the Prime Minister on whether he would keep the House informed of "developments in diplomatic circles and in naval and air force fields in the present crisis in United States and Soviet relations over charges concerning the building of missile bases and jetports in Cuba." This was a matter, he continued, "about which the world learnt from an authoritative source for the

² A survey of reporting on the Cuban Crisis by Australian regional newspapers is beyond the scope of this thesis. However, for examples of such reporting, see: "Cuban Blockade By U.S. Ships: Huge Fleet Is Fanning Out Over Atlantic," *News-Mail* (Bundaberg, Queensland), 24 October 1962, 1; and "Air-Sea Blockade of Cuba by U.S.: Kennedy Throws Down Gauntlet To Khrushchev: Ships Carrying Arms Will Be Turned Back," *Kalgoorlie Miner* (Western Australia), 24 October 1962, 1.

³ Parliament previously sat on 18 October 1962; see Commonwealth Parliamentary Debates (CPD), House of Representatives (House), vol. 37, 18 October 1962.

first time when President Kennedy delivered his broadcast to the American people a few hours ago.”⁴ Menzies replied that he would seek leave to deliver “a very short statement about the broadcast — but by no means an exhaustive one,” and if there were “further developments of a kind that [he could] communicate to the House,” then he would do so.⁵

Immediately following Question Time, Menzies delivered a concise and comprehensive ministerial statement to what the *Canberra Times* described as “a tense and packed House.”⁶ Menzies steadfastly positioned Australia behind the US in the Cuban Crisis. He began by referring to Kennedy’s broadcast on Cuba, about which he noted members would be aware, as “a declaration of historic importance.” Kennedy, he stated, had demonstrated that the Soviet Union was installing “offensive nuclear weapons” in Cuba and that the Americas were facing “a very grave threat at close quarters,” the gravity of which was “profoundly demonstrated by both the tone and substance” of his address. Menzies commended Kennedy’s statement, noting that while it was “inevitably dramatic, it was in essence defensive.” He expressed appreciation for Kennedy’s “reference to the vital importance of regional defensive agreements” authorised under the UN Charter, which he noted were essential for “the common safety” of those in the region. Here, Menzies inferred the Rio Treaty and the OAS, and the security such arrangements were intended to provide the people of the Americas. Menzies then welcomed the willingness of the US “to bring the matter promptly before the United

⁴ Arthur Calwell (ALP, Member for Melbourne, Leader of the Opposition), CPD, House, vol. 37, 23 October 1962, 1773.

⁵ R.G. Menzies (Liberal Party, Member for Kooyong, Prime Minister), *ibid.*

⁶ “Menzies Praises Action By U.S.,” *Canberra Times*, 24 October 1962, 1.

Nations.” He informed the House that he received a personal letter from Kennedy that morning, detailed earlier in this chapter, which like the broadcast, outlined US plans over the situation. Menzies reiterated that the US would request an urgent meeting of the UN Security Council where its ambassador would present a resolution that called for “missile bases and other offensive weapons in Cuba” to be withdrawn under the supervision of UN observers. He declared that Australia’s Ambassador to the UN had been instructed “to do all in his power to support the passing of this resolution.” This was despite the fact, which Menzies acknowledged, that Australia did not hold a seat on the Security Council. Menzies also emphasised Soviet duplicity, noting at the beginning of his statement that Kennedy demonstrated the Soviet Union’s “determination by threat of aggression to terrorize nations whose only wish is for peace.” He concluded with a hope that Kennedy’s broadcast and the steps to follow would

bring home to the Soviet Union the nature of the consequences which may flow from its overseas policies. Indeed, the whole matter will serve to test whether the Soviet Union’s constant advocacy of peace possesses either sincerity or substance.⁷

Calwell also, by leave, made a statement immediately after the Prime Minister, whose comments he acknowledged. Calwell began by stating that due to the speed at which events had occurred since Kennedy’s broadcast “only a few hours ago” (five and a half hours to be exact), neither he nor other members of the Opposition—and members of the Government, he presumed—had had an opportunity to read a transcript of Kennedy’s broadcast. Calwell then noted that only ten minutes ago was Menzies able to provide him with a copy of the statement he had just delivered. Although he had

⁷ Ibid., 1780–1. Menzies’ statement was included in External Affairs’ Current Notes, vol. 33, no. 10, October 1962, 45.

insufficient time to prepare a considered statement on the situation, he wanted “to add some remarks of my own to what the Prime Minister has said.” Kennedy’s announcement of a “naval blockade of Cuba” to halt the arrival of “certain war materials” there, and of steps intended “to prevent the construction of nuclear missile sites and air bases which he [Kennedy] believes is proceeding, and which could threaten disaster” to the Americas, Calwell believed was “in language that cannot be misunderstood.” He also stated that Kennedy laid “the blame for the sudden crisis on Russia’s intrusion into the western hemisphere.” Calwell claimed that people around the world were watching the situation that was unfolding with horror, and emphasised it was peace not war that they desired. War, he said, was wasteful, produced vast suffering, and was useless in terms of settling matters. The world was praying, Calwell stated, for the preservation of peace; an unsurprising choice of words for a man who was a devout Catholic, and who would later receive a papal knighthood.⁸ Calwell also took the opportunity to reiterate his Party’s position on nuclear bases: “No sensible person would wish to see the extension of nuclear bases anywhere. We of the Labour [*sic*] Party are opposed to such extensions whether in Cuba or anywhere else.” He concluded by stating that Australians he thought hoped that “this present crisis will not end in armed conflict, but will be resolved peacefully through the United Nations, the seventeenth anniversary of whose birth occurs to-day.”⁹

⁸ Mary Elizabeth Calwell, *I Am Bound to be True: The Life and Legacy of Arthur A. Calwell* (Preston, Victoria: Mosaic Press, 2012), 159–61.

⁹ Calwell, CPD, House, vol. 37, 23 October 1962, 1781.

Menzies and Calwell's statements were also read in the Senate. Proceedings commenced at 3:00 p.m., 30 minutes later than the House.¹⁰ Unaware of what had taken place there, George Branson (Liberal Party, Western Australia) asked the representative for the Minister for External Affairs in the Senate, Bill Spooner (Liberal Party, New South Wales), as to when the Senate could "expect an authoritative statement from the Australian Government in relation to this grave situation that has arisen?" Spooner responded that he would soon ask for leave to make a statement on the subject.¹¹ But before he could do so, Justin O'Byrne (ALP, Tasmania) asked Spooner a further question, specifically,

whether in his statement he will give some indication of the Government's views on the sensational statement made by the President of the United States of America in connexion with Cuba and whether that statement could lead Australia into a world war.¹²

He queried further as to whether it could be deduced that such a statement was "influenced by the pressures from rival Republican and Democrat contenders in the forthcoming congressional elections?" Spooner simply responded: "This is a matter of far-reaching importance. I prefer Senator O'Byrne to hear the statement and then make his own assessment of it."¹³ Clearly, the significance of President Kennedy's statement was observed in the Senate. At the conclusion on question time, Spooner and the Leader of the Opposition in the Senate, Nick McKenna (ALP, Tasmania), obtained leave to deliver the statements in the House of Menzies and Calwell, respectively. McKenna added: "Speaking personally, I hope that Russia will end the crisis by very promptly

¹⁰ "In Parliament," *Canberra Times*, 24 October 1962, 2.

¹¹ CPD, Senate, vol. 22, 23 October 1962, 1025. Spooner was also the Minister for National Development and Vice-President of the Executive Council.

¹² CPD, Senate, vol. 22, 23 October 1962, 1026.

¹³ *Ibid.*

dismantling the bases that it is causing to be established in Cuba.”¹⁴ Having laid the blame squarely with the Soviet Union, McKenna’s reaction was consistent with the response of the Government, which is discussed further in Chapter 2.

The following day (24 October 1962), Menzies’ and Calwell’s parliamentary statements were widely reported in Australian daily, metropolitan newspapers. Most newspapers reproduced the Prime Minister’s entire speech,¹⁵ and some even published the full text of Kennedy’s address.¹⁶ The crisis, but not Menzies or Calwell’s statements, was also the subject of editorials, which are discussed in later chapters of this thesis.¹⁷ The *Courier-Mail* was the only newspaper to even reference the Prime Minister’s statement having condoned the position adopted by the Government:

Australia knows America as a friendly and peaceful nation. Our security—like that of most of the Free World—depends on the United States. In indicating his support of President Kennedy, the Prime Minister (Mr. Menzies) yesterday rightly stated where Australia’s interest in Cuba lies.¹⁸

¹⁴ Ibid., 1028–9.

¹⁵ “Menzies Praises Action By U.S.,” *Canberra Times*, 24 October 1962, 1; “Prime Minister Pledges Australia’s Support” and “Support from Australia,” *Age* (Melbourne), 24 October 1962, 1 and 5; “We Back U.S., Says Menzies: JFK in touch,” *Sun* (Melbourne), 24 October 1962, 2; “Australian Pledge Of Support,” *Sydney Morning Herald*, 24 October 1962, 1; “Menzies: We back American action,” *Courier-Mail* (Brisbane), 24 October 1962, 1; “P.M. Says—‘We Support U.S.’” and “Australia’s Support For U.S.,” *Advertiser* (Adelaide), 24 October 1962, 1 and 6; and “Australia Backs U.S. Stand Over Cuba,” *Mercury* (Hobart), 24 October 1962, 3. Only the *Canberra Times* and the *Courier-Mail* provided a summary as opposed to a full reproduction of Menzies’ statement.

¹⁶ “Kennedy’s Speech in Full: Grave Warning to Free World,” “The 1930s Taught Us a Lesson,” and “Dangers Ahead for U.S.,” *Canberra Times*, 24 October 1962, 8, 38–9; “Mr. Kennedy’s Address to the Nation on Crisis over Cuba,” *Age*, 24 October 1962, 5; “Moment of Crisis: The Sun Presents, as the Record of a Momentous Occasion, the Full Text of... President Kennedy’s Cuba Speech,” *Sun*, 24 October 1962, 28–9; “What President Kennedy Said: ‘Attack by Cuba an attack by Russians’,” *Courier-Mail*, 24 October 1962, 4; “Full Text Of President’s Cuba Warning” and “President’s Warning,” *Advertiser* (Adelaide), 24 October 1962, 8 and 10; and “President Tells of Cuban Threat” and “Cuban Decision,” *Mercury*, 24 October 1962, 8 and 9.

¹⁷ “Cuban Crisis,” *Canberra Times*, 24 October 1962, 2; “Critical Trial of Strength,” *Age* (Melbourne), 24 October 1962, 2; “The American Blockade of Cuba,” *Sydney Morning Herald*, 24 October 1962, 2; “President says: No!,” *Courier-Mail*, 24 October 1962, 2; “All the Risks are Grave,” *Advertiser*, 24 October 1962, 2; and “Chips are down,” *Mercury*, 24 October 1962, 4.

¹⁸ “President says: No!,” *Courier-Mail*, 24 October 1962, 2.

The Cuban situation was the subject of extensive reporting in the major Australian daily newspapers into early November 1962.

In addition to the Commonwealth Parliament, parliaments in some Australian states sat on 23 October 1962. As international affairs is a federal matter, it is not surprising that the crisis received no mention that day, or in the weeks that followed, in the parliaments of Victoria, Queensland, South Australia, and Western Australia.¹⁹ The crisis was, however, raised in the New South Wales (NSW) Parliament. Although the discussion concentrated on civil defence, which is discussed further in Chapter 6, it revealed that the crisis has sparked widespread concern. In NSW, Bill Chaffey (Country Party Member for Tamworth) asked the Premier, Bob Heffron (ALP Member for Maroubra) on 25 October 1962 whether “It is a fact that the current developments over Cuba have very wide implications for the whole world?” He also asked if the NSW Cabinet had considered the matter. In essence, Chaffey sought clarity on the Government’s intentions. Heffron replied that the Government, including the Cabinet, was watching the matter closely and would be “ready and willing to co-operate in any way we are expected to act as a people.” He also noted that the federal government had not been in contact with him or the Cabinet to provide further information or instruction. Heffron stated:

¹⁹ Victoria’s Legislative Council or Legislative Assembly from 23 October to 29 November 1962 inclusive: *Victoria: Parliamentary Debates (Hansard)*, Session 1962–63, vols. 268–9, 931–2111; Queensland’s Legislative Council or Legislative Assembly from 23 October to 29 November 1962 inclusive: *Queensland: Parliamentary Debates (Hansard)*, 1962, vols. 233–4, 954–2115; and Western Australia’s Legislative Council or Legislative Assembly from 23 October to 15 November 1962 inclusive: *Western Australia: Parliamentary Debates (Hansard)*, 1962–63, vols. 162–3, 1858–2991. Whether the crisis was raised in the Tasmanian Parliament cannot be determined. The Tasmanian Parliament did not publish its parliamentary debates until 1979: “Tasmanian government publications: About Hansard,” State Library of Victoria, <http://guides.slv.vic.gov.au/tasgovpubs/hansard> (accessed 14 July 2017).

I feel sure that as soon as we learn something of what the federal Government considers we should do, that Government will immediately confer with us at the top level, or get in touch with us right away. I have no doubt that the federal Government will do that, even today, if the need should arise.²⁰

No evidence has been located to demonstrate that the Menzies Government did in fact contact Heffron or the NSW Cabinet regarding the crisis. While NSW parliamentarians were mindful of the possibility of global nuclear war, the lack of communication from the federal Government is probably a reflection of its assessment of the nuclear threat as low. This is also discussed further in Chapter 6. A federal matter, state parliaments seemingly trusted that the Menzies Government was managing the crisis.

The Cuban Missile Crisis moved swiftly with developments unfolding, not just on a daily, but on an hourly or sometimes minute-by-minute, basis. The vast literature on the crisis makes this plain, with Michael Dobbs' *One Minute to Midnight* an excellent example. An examination of when and how Australians first became aware of the situation involving Cuba is therefore an important and necessary place for this history of Australia and the Cuban Crisis to begin.

This chapter has demonstrated that in Australia, intelligence officials were the first to learn of the crisis, and did so prior to President Kennedy's address on 22 October 1962 EST. It was signals intelligence, courtesy of Australia's intelligence cooperation with its allies originating in World War II, which alerted officials to the situation. This probably prompted Australia's Director of Military Intelligence to travel to Washington D.C. to

²⁰ NSWPD, Session 1962–63–64, vol. 42, 25 October 1962, 1231.

inquire further as to the impending crisis. Although the information gleaned by Australian intelligence officials is unknown, their role nonetheless forms an essential component of Australia's crisis experience. In contrast, this chapter has detailed the information on the crisis obtained by key Australian diplomats in Washington and public servants in Canberra, who were first informed of the situation by US officials on 22 October 1962 EST and 23 October 1962 AEST respectively. It was on 23 October 1962 that Prime Minister Robert Menzies was briefed on the crisis by Australian officials and US Ambassador to Australia, William C. Battle. Menzies too was kept well informed having received a personal letter from Kennedy and an advance copy of his address. However, unlike some of its allies, Australia did not receive significant advance notice of the crisis.

The first reports that a potential crisis involving Cuba had developed were published on 22 October 1962 on ABC radio news and in two newspapers, the Melbourne *Herald* and the Adelaide *News*. The following morning, ABC radio reported that Kennedy would deliver an address on the situation, about which only the *Sydney Morning Herald* and the Adelaide *Advertiser* had informed their readerships. While Australian newspapers contained detailed and insightful reports, they were somewhat redundant by the time they went to print. Television was another source of news for Australians living in capital cities (except Darwin) and some regional areas. However, the absence of recordings of news bulletins on the crisis means that the role of television in Australia's experience cannot be adequately assessed. Nonetheless, the lack of satellites and terrestrial links, and the consequent delays arising from material being flown in from

overseas and then transported around Australia, indicate that regarding the crisis, television was unlikely to have played an integral role in Australia as it did in the UK. For that reason, it is also inappropriate to suggest that the Cuban Crisis was a television crisis for Australians in the way it has been remembered in the literature on the subject. As this chapter has made clear, radio provided Australians with the most up to date developments on the crisis, and additionally, it broadcast the President's address. Further, this chapter has demonstrated that Australian officials became aware of the crisis around the same time as the Australian public.

It was only a matter of hours after Kennedy's broadcast that Menzies and Calwell delivered parliamentary statements on the crisis. Menzies moved swiftly to declare Australia's support for US in the crisis and deplore the actions of the Soviet Union. He advised the Parliament that Australia's Ambassador to the UN, James Plimsoll, had been instructed to support the US resolution before the UN Security Council. It was a concise yet comprehensive statement of policy, and by no means reactive. As the next chapter will demonstrate, the Australian Government considered a myriad of issues in formulating its policy, determining the US alliance to be the factor of paramount importance.

Cabinet Formulates Australia's Policy on the Crisis

The period 1941–69 is of major significance to Australian foreign policy. The conclusion of World War II saw the onset of the Cold War, and thus a rapid polarisation of states into competing ideological and strategic blocs. This was coupled with a declining British presence in Australia's region. Additionally, decolonisation brought about important regional changes, with many states to Australia's near north gaining independence. This resulted in dynamic changes in the make-up of the United Nations (UN) and raised questions for Australian policy-makers as to how they would engage constructively with their new neighbours in the Asia-Pacific. Significantly and unsurprisingly, "the shift of Australia's strategic priorities to Southeast Asia, the fear of Chinese communism and the associated realignment with the United States, were the defining features of Australian defence and foreign policy in this period."¹ It was in this context, and with these strategic priorities in focus, that the Menzies Government formulated Australia's policy on the Cuban Crisis.

This chapter examines the Government's policy-making on the crisis in detail. It shows how the Government swiftly determined its position, which Menzies declared in Parliament on 23 October 1962. As demonstrated in the previous chapter, this was on the same day most Australians, except those in the Australian intelligence community, first learned of the crisis. By examining the private communications of the Cabinet,

¹ Joan Beaumont, Christopher Waters, David Lowe, with Garry Woodard, eds., *Ministers, Mandarins and Diplomats: Australian Foreign Policy Making, 1941–1969* (Carlton, Victoria: Melbourne University Press, 2003), 5.

senior ministers, key officials in the Departments of Prime Minister and External Affairs, and relevant diplomats, the chapter reveals the myriad factors the Australian Government considered in developing its policy on the Crisis. While Australia's treaty commitments, regional security, interest in acquiring nuclear weapons, trade relations, as well as other states' responses (especially the British reaction) to the crisis were contemplated, this chapter argues that the factor of paramount importance was Australia's alliance with the United States. Australia's support for the US on the crisis was unequivocal and this was emphasised publicly in Parliament. But behind closed doors, policymakers carefully considered the basis and extent of such support. This demonstrates that Australia's policy on the crisis was constrained rather than unconditional, considered rather than reflexive, and shaped by strategic calculations of Australian interests. This is made plain, first and foremost, in the records of the Cabinet.

Cabinet Deliberates on the Crisis

Within hours of becoming aware of the Cuban Crisis on 23 October 1962, the Australian Cabinet deliberated and formulated Australia's policy on it. The Cabinet, the primary decision-making body of the government that then comprised the prime minister and 11 senior ministers,² met on Tuesday mornings when Parliament was

² "Ministries and Cabinets" in Part 6: Historical information on the Australian Parliament, 32nd Edition Parliamentary Handbook of the Commonwealth of Australia (2011), 516, http://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/download/handbook/newhandbook/2011-10-13/toc_pdf_repeat/Part%206%20-%20Historical%20information%20on%20the%20Australian%20Parliament.pdf;fileType=application%2Fpdf (accessed 29 November 2013). The composition of the Cabinet was significantly reformed following the 1955 election. When Menzies appointed the Ministry, he selected senior and junior ministers, and only senior ministers were to form the Cabinet: David Lee, "Cabinet" in *The Menzies Era: A Reappraisal of Government, Politics and Policy*, eds. Scott Prasser, J. R. Nethercote, and John Warhurst (Sydney: Hale & Iremonger, 1995), 131–2; and A. W. Martin, *Robert Menzies: A Life, Volume 2, 1944–1978* (Carlton South, Victoria: Melbourne University Press, 1999), 315–6.

sitting, and therefore conveniently, was already scheduled to meet at 10:30 a.m.³ Cabinet records, specifically the relevant Cabinet notebook, declassified in 2011, provide important insight into Cabinet's deliberations on the crisis and the policy-making process. The Cabinet notebook is not a verbatim or complete account of Cabinet's deliberations. Rather, it was used by the Cabinet Secretary as "an aide-memoire for drafting the formal Cabinet decision after the meeting,"⁴ and where necessary, "to give some guidance to his colleagues who were departmental heads about the manner of giving effect to the decision or about considerations that came into its making."⁵ However, Cabinet's discussion of the crisis, including the views of individual ministers, was recorded in the notebook in great detail by the Cabinet Secretary, John Bunting, who was also the Secretary of the Department of Prime Minister.⁶ The Cabinet notebook therefore reveals factors that influenced the Australian Government's policy on the crisis, each of which is explored in turn, along with other considerations, throughout this chapter.

"Blockade of Cuba" was the first item the Cabinet discussed that morning.⁷ Menzies, as the head of cabinet, chaired the meeting in which he read aloud (but seemingly did not

³ National Archives of Australia (NAA): A11099, 1/59, Cabinet Notebook, 23 October 1962.

⁴ "Cabinet notebooks – Fact sheet 128," NAA, Australian Government, <http://www.naa.gov.au/collection/fact-sheets/fs128.aspx> (accessed 22 July 2014).

⁵ John Bunting, *R.G. Menzies: A Portrait* (Sydney: Allen & Unwin, 1988), 91.

⁶ Occasionally, Bunting wrote in shorthand or abbreviated words, which were sometimes difficult to decipher. In this section, square brackets denote the author's interpretation of Bunting's handwritten notes.

⁷ NAA: A11099, 1/59, Cabinet Notebook, 23 October 1962. According to the then Minister for Civil Aviation, Shane Paltridge, the order of business was decided by the PM and rarely accorded with the agenda: Lee, "Cabinet," 132.

circulate) Kennedy's letter and referred to his address.⁸ However, it was the Minister for External Affairs and Attorney-General, Garfield Barwick, who led the discussion; the only Cabinet member, according to Minister for Immigration, Alexander Downer, whose "powers of exposition" equalled, and sometimes exceeded, those of the PM.⁹ In the Menzies Cabinet period, ministers were expected and trusted to take responsibility for their departments,¹⁰ and were considered "the primary authority on their own subjects."¹¹ As an international issue, the Cuban Crisis was Barwick's domain.

After noting that a message from Australia's Ambassador in the US (Chargé d'Affaires, Donald Munro) was incoming, Barwick went through the President's statement, referring to the "evidence of missile capacity," and the "furtiveness of Russian action," in Cuba. According to Bunting, Barwick felt "Kennedy has laid it on the line for Russia re Cuba + [and] Berlin." Barwick insisted to his colleagues that Australia instruct its Ambassador to the UN, Jim Plimsoll, to support the US. He therefore advised that Australia channel its support for the US through the UN. At that time, Australia was not a member of the UN Security Council, where the US would present its resolution.¹² However, Barwick presumed it would be vetoed there, and subsequently, the resolution

⁸ NAA: A11099, 1/59, Cabinet Notebook, 23 October 1962. British PM, Harold Macmillan, also "read out aloud (but did not circulate) the vital documents" to the Cabinet when it first discussed the Cuban crisis at its meeting on 23 October 1962 at 10:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. (GMT): Harold Macmillan, *The Macmillan Diaries: Prime Minister and After, 1957–66*, Peter Catterall, ed. (London: Macmillan, 2011), 510 (23 October). Emphasis in original.

⁹ Alexander Downer, *Six Prime Ministers* (Melbourne: Hill of Content, 1982), 15.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 18.

¹¹ Bunting, *R.G. Menzies*, 81.

¹² Australia has been a non-permanent member of the UN Security Council on five occasions: 1946–47, 1956–57, 1973–74, 1985–86, and 2013–14: "Australia and the Security Council," UN Association of Australia, <http://www.unaa.org.au/australia-and-the-security-council.html> (accessed 16 December 2014); and "Australia's Seat On The UN Security Council," UN Association of Australia, <http://www.unaa.org.au/australias-seat-on-the-un-security-council.html> (accessed 16 December 2014).

would be presented to the General Assembly where Australia would have an opportunity to support it formally. Barwick told the Cabinet that Australia “must support [the] US” but the basis of that support needed to be determined. This was where the discussion then turned.¹³

The first question Menzies asked was “Do we have any trade w. [with] Cuba[?],” to which the Minister for Trade, John McEwen, replied “Nothing as far as I’m aware.” As Chapter 5 shows, the Minister was incorrect: Australia and Cuba traded and their economic relations had implications for the Australia-US alliance, which warranted further deliberation. The discussion, however, had quickly moved on. In agreement with Barwick, but wanting “not to be too punctilious,” the Minister for Labour and National Service, William McMahon, then stated “we need to support US,” for it is “in their interest but also heavily in ours.” He thought it was a matter on which Menzies should make a statement. Barwick, also “not wantg. [wanting] to be punctilious,” urged that the Cabinet “approach this with sound common sense,” particularly with regards to establishing the basis of its position: “is Russian deception the footg. [footing] for instance—deception is part of the aggression,” he ruminated. The Minister for Territories, Paul Hasluck, felt that Menzies must make a statement or answer a question on the matter. He thought that regional security could be the basis of the Australian Government’s support, specifically, that Australia support the decision of the US to invoke its regional security arrangements. Barwick agreed that was warranted, but was concerned “to avoid implications agst. [against] US. bases.” This comment reflects a

¹³ NAA: A11099, 1/59, Cabinet Notebook, 23 October 1962.

discussion between Barwick and the Secretary of the Department of External Affairs, Arthur Tange, earlier that morning regarding Australian nuclear weapons ambitions, which is discussed in Chapter 3. The Treasurer, Harold Holt, stated that the Australian Government “must of course indicate warm American sympathy,” but limit itself to a short statement in response to a question. This, he felt, was “in order to let dust settle a bit before we get into detailed argument.” Holt, therefore, thought the Government should avoid making a comprehensive and lengthy policy statement on the immediate situation. McEwen adopted a similar position to Holt. Subsequently, he recommended that the Government’s policy be a narrow one, but one that expressed unequivocal support for the US. He was also keen to obtain the British Government’s views of the situation promptly. According to Bunting, McEwen stated:

As to policy, what we say (in other words) is that we’re with the Americans, no matter what. But we need to discover as soon as we can what the British reaction is.

My feeling is as Holt’s that we can’t see through this [...] yet to take a detailed stand—so make the base as narrow as we might—but leave no doubt as to our support of US.¹⁴

McMahon agreed “with caution” proposed.¹⁵

Rather than answer a question, Menzies thought that he should make a statement, agreeing with Holt and McEwen that it should not be detailed. The “shorter the statement the better,” he added. Menzies began to outline to the Cabinet the proposed content of his statement, taking into consideration the Ministers’ views. He summarised:

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ Ibid.

we thk [think] whole of Sov. [Soviet] activity in Cuba now disclosed is eg. [example] of their deceitl [deceitful] methods[:] the reaction of US is a superb eg. [example] of the value of regional arrangements; that we propose to instruct our Ambassador to lend them our support in UN.¹⁶

But the Ministers, who were eager to help Menzies with the wording, interjected making it a more collaborative exercise. Barwick advised that Australia “not limit support ‘to UN’.” McEwen suggested subsequently, “make it support for US in UN; that[’s] its proposal.” Menzies then went to continue with his outline, stating it would “Say we welcome US initiative,” but Barwick again interrupted to add “And commend their approach to UN.” McEwen urged, “Still think we must see the UN reaction.” Menzies agreed and noted, “if there is a diffce [difference] of vies. [views] we wld [would] have to take that into a/c [account].” Barwick advised that he would follow-up the views within the UN. McEwen then clarified that by the Government looking at other views, it “Doesn’t mean we weaken our support for US but its [*sic*] a factor in the handling.” Holt also recommended that Menzies mention the letter he received from Kennedy. Menzies then concluded the Cabinet’s discussion of the crisis stating that it would “return to this if necy. [necessary]” once they received the “full texts.”¹⁷

The Cabinet then discussed monetary policy and an issue relating to land in Brigalow, Queensland. Towards the end of that discussion, Menzies left the meeting to draft his statement on the Cuban Crisis.¹⁸ That Menzies prepared a written statement on the Cuban Crisis indicates that he approached it as a major speech and “with very great

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ Ibid.

care” as distinct from a less formal speech where he would simply “say a few words’.”¹⁹ Formal announcements aside, the PM was otherwise averse to writing out a speech in full beforehand.²⁰ Meanwhile, the Cabinet continued to go about its business, discussing reconstruction of the Legislative Council in Papua and New Guinea, stabilisation of the egg industry, and a wheat advance, before it returned to the “Cuba Blockade.” Bunting simply noted that Menzies, who had re-joined the meeting, read a draft of his statement and the Cabinet “Agreed.”²¹ It therefore accepted Menzies’ statement without change or comment. Bunting summarised the Cabinet’s discussion and decision in the official Cabinet minute:

The Cabinet felt that the statement should be clear in its support for the United States in the action taken in response to the Soviet activity and deceit, but at this stage should not be more detailed than necessary.²²

The fact that the Cabinet had met and discussed the Cuban situation was reported the following day by some Australian daily, metropolitan newspapers, including the *Canberra Times*, *Sun*, *Advertiser*, *Courier-Mail*, and *Mercury*. According to the latter two newspapers, the meeting was “long and intense.”²³

The Cabinet minute and Menzies’ parliamentary statement accurately reflect the Cabinet’s deliberations as detailed by Bunting in the Cabinet notebook. The Ministers’

¹⁹ For more on the distinction between Menzies’ major speeches and those approached more casually, see Paul Hasluck, *The Chance of Politics*, Nicholas Hasluck, ed. (Melbourne: Text Publishing, 1997), 10–11.

²⁰ Downer, *Six Prime Ministers*, 9.

²¹ NAA: A11099, 1/59, Cabinet Notebook, 23 October 1962.

²² NAA: A1838, 262/12/8/1 part 1, “Cabinet Minute: Decision No. 495,” 23 October 1962.

²³ “Menzies Praises Action By U.S.,” *Canberra Times*, 24 October 1962, 1; “We Back U.S., Says Menzies: JFK in touch,” *Sun*, 24 October 1962, 2; “P.M. Says—‘We Support U.S.’” *Advertiser*, 24 October 1962, 1; “Menzies: We back American action,” *Courier-Mail*, 24 October 1962, 1; and “Australia Backs U.S. Stand Over Cuba,” *Mercury*, 24 October 1962, 3.

discussion regarding the nature of Soviet actions, the US decision to invoke regional security arrangements, and its approach to the UN, each became key points in Menzies' statement, as detailed in the previous chapter. The point that was made absolutely clear was Australia's unequivocal support for the US, its most powerful friend. This was illustrated by the strong contempt Menzies expressed towards the Soviet Union and his instruction to Plimsoll "to do all in his power to support the passing of [the US] resolution" in the UN.²⁴ It should be recalled that in his personal letter to Menzies, Kennedy requested the Australian Government to support the US resolution in the UN.²⁵ This therefore demonstrates that the Government met that request, but in light of these Cabinet records, to suggest Australian support was axiomatic would be inaccurate. Rather, the instruction to Plimsoll reflects the Cabinet's decision to confine Australian support for the US to that forum. The Ministers made it plain that the basis of the Australian Government's support needed to be carefully determined. Australia's policy, they felt, should be narrow, concise, and not overly formal or detailed, for the manner in which the situation would unfold and other states' views remained unclear. McMahon and Barwick's use of the term "punctilious" exemplifies this. It indicates that they did not want to be perceived as pedantic about the details of Australia's position, concerned that this would impose doubt on the strength of Australian support for the US. McEwen even made this exact argument when he clarified that by seeking other states' reactions to the crisis, Australia's support for the US was not weakened. Evidently, careful management and maintenance of the US alliance was of paramount importance to Australian policymakers.

²⁴ R.G. Menzies, *Commonwealth Parliamentary Debates* (CPD), House of Representatives (House), vol. 37, 23 October 1962, 1780–1.

²⁵ NAA: A1838, 262/12/8/1 part 3, Kennedy to Menzies, 23 October 1962.

It is clear that the Cabinet notebook is immensely valuable given its ability to illuminate what the Government took into consideration, and factors that influenced it, in determining its policy on the crisis. Likewise, it also reveals what the Government did *not* consider and what did *not* influence its decision. In terms of subject matter, there are three notable absences from the Cabinet notebook. First, there is no reference to the nuclear threat posed by the crisis. The terms ‘nuclear’ or ‘nuclear war’ simply do not appear in the Cabinet notebook. There is no mention of the possibility of escalation or the threat of global war. Second, and somewhat related to the first, there is no reference to civil defence. There is no discussion or direction given as to whether Australia should, or should at least consider, activating civil defence plans. This matter was raised by some state governments and is discussed further in Chapter 6. Third, Cuba is only referred to geographically and not in terms of being responsible for the crisis. It is made plain in the Cabinet notebook, and in Menzies’ parliamentary statement which followed, that the Government only allocated responsibility to the Soviet Union. It was also a view cleverly depicted by cartoonist for the *Sydney Morning Herald*, George Molnar:



Illustration 2: *Sydney Morning Herald*, 23 November 1962, 2.

As stated earlier, the Cabinet notebook is not a verbatim or complete account of the Cabinet's deliberations; it is of course possible that these matters were discussed and not noted. Nevertheless, their absence from the Cabinet notebook suggests that they were not deliberated. That the Cabinet did not discuss, in particular, the nuclear nature of the crisis, is remarkable.

It is also worth highlighting that no information on the Cuban situation was provided to Cabinet members from the Australian intelligence community to aid them in determining the Government's policy on the crisis. While there is no record of the New Zealand Cabinet having discussed the crisis, which is in stark contrast to Australia, the Cabinet did receive weekly briefings titled "Intelligence Review" from New Zealand's

Joint Intelligence Committee (JIC), some of which referred to the crisis.¹ At this stage, Australia's JIC did not provide similar reports to the Australian Cabinet nor was the Cabinet provided with any information gleaned by Director of Military Intelligence, Stuart Graham's US visit, which was outlined in the previous chapter. Regarding the latter point, again it is possible that the matter was discussed and not written in the notebook; the fact that this is intelligence-related makes that plausible. However, it is more likely that Cabinet members were not provided with any information from the intelligence services.

On the connection between intelligence and foreign policy formulation, the views of Keith Waller, the first career diplomat to be appointed Ambassador to the US and later Secretary to the Department of Foreign Affairs, are most insightful. Waller was asked to provide a detailed assessment of the intelligence services by Robert Hope, the New South Wales (NSW) Supreme Court judge appointed to head the Royal Commission on Intelligence and Security from 1974–77.² According to Alan Fewster, who is working on a biography of the former diplomat and public servant, Waller explained to Hope: “Major foreign policy decisions were not, he wrote, greatly influenced by ‘scraps of intelligence,’ whether acquired overtly or covertly. While they helped build a broad

¹ The crisis was not mentioned in the Review of 24 October 1962, but it was the lead item of the 31 October 1962. Also, there was a reference to the crisis being discussed in a Review dated 26 October 1962, which may have been a special edition on the subject. However, this cannot be verified as the Review was not archived with other Reviews and could not otherwise be located. The Reviews and subsequent editions are contained in a single file covering the period 1960–63: Archives New Zealand (ANZ): Intelligence—General—Intelligence Review, AAFD 811 W3738/1331 CAB 235/1/2.

² Alan Fewster, “‘We must be careful to avoid seeking intelligence simply for its own sake’,” *Inside Story*, 1 August 2014, <http://insidestory.org.au/we-must-be-careful-to-avoid-seeking-intelligence-simply-for-its-own-sake> (accessed 26 November 2014). For more information on the Royal Commission and the records it produced, see: NAA, “Royal Commission on Intelligence and Security,” <http://www.naa.gov.au/collection/explore/security/royal-commission/> (accessed 29 September 2015).

picture on which a decision was made, these fragments were ultimately peripheral.”³ Indeed, “scraps” seemed the most fitting description of the intelligence available to Cabinet members when formulating Australia’s policy on the Cuban Crisis. As detailed in Chapter 1, apart from specific details contained in Kennedy’s address and letter to Menzies; Munro’s dedicated efforts to obtain information from his colleagues, careful observation of the press, and attendance at US-run meetings of heads of delegations; and signals intelligence (the content of which remains unknown), the Australian Government had little information on the Cuban situation to go on. Moreover, the intelligence it did possess was all derived from US sources. This thesis shows, just as Waller stated, that the Cuban Crisis was one such foreign policy decision that was not greatly influenced by piecemeal intelligence.

Finally, it is significant that no comments were attributed to the Minister for Defence, Athol Townley.⁴ This suggests that he did not attend the Cabinet meeting, which in itself is remarkable. It is difficult to imagine that, if the Defence Minister was in fact in attendance, he would have had no views to offer the Cabinet in its policy deliberations on a situation that could lead to global nuclear war. Should Townley have been in attendance, Menzies presumably would not have accommodated his silence. According to Bunting, there were a few ministers, Townley being one of them, whose true value lay not in their portfolio, “but in their general experience and wisdom, including political wisdom,” and who offered “matter-of-fact practical and political assessments.”

³ Fewster, “‘We must be careful to avoid seeking intelligence simply for its own sake’.”

⁴ Nor are comments attributed to the following members of Cabinet, albeit with less relevant portfolios: Minister for National Development and Vice-President of the Executive Council, William “Bill” Spooner; Minister for Civil Aviation, Shane Paltridge; Minister for Immigration, Alexander (Alick) Downer; Minister for Primary Industry, Charles Adermann; and Postmaster-General, Charles Davidson.

Bunting added: “Menzies seldom let a Cabinet discussion go by without having heard from at least one of these, and if none had by an intervention of his own disclosed a view, he was practically certain to draw it out of one or all of them.”⁵ That Menzies did not draw out Townley’s view on the Cuban Crisis further indicates his absence from the Cabinet meeting. Townley’s silence and probable absence from Cabinet reflects a more general silence from the Minister and his Department during the crisis, which, this thesis demonstrates, was skilfully and predominantly managed by the Department of External Affairs.

Menzies in Cabinet

In addition to detailing the Cabinet’s reaction to the Cuban Crisis, the Cabinet notebook provides valuable insight into the conduct of Cabinet meetings. In his second memoir, Menzies wrote “There is a curious sort of legend in Australia that I was a dictator in Cabinet, that ministers accepted my views on pain of dismissal or disfavour.” He dismissed this as “folk-lore,” noting that it failed to do justice to his skilled, courageous, and experienced colleagues. He also called it “fantastic nonsense” because it suggested that only he should have been credited for Cabinet’s successful decisions. In Menzies’ view, “no Prime Minister and no member of Cabinet may claim the sole credit for any particular Government policy or measure. It would be absurd and unfair to his colleagues if he did so.”⁶

⁵ Bunting, *R.G. Menzies*, 88.

⁶ R.G. Menzies, *The Measure of the Years* (North Melbourne: Cassell Australia Ltd, 1970), 33–4.

Opinions were divided as to Menzies' behaviour in Cabinet. On the PM's retirement, Peter Howson, who became Minister for Air in Menzies' final ministry, wrote in his diary that Menzies was "Obviously a great parliamentarian and an unrivalled *political* leader."⁷ However, he was also critical of Menzies, who intimidated him:

He led by dominating, not by team work. He didn't get the best out of his closest Ministers and assistants. An amazing capacity for hard work; I feel he worked harder than necessary because he wouldn't let people take some of the responsibility. Hence there was a lot of procrastination. We were all scared of him in Cabinet; most Ministers waited to see what RGM [Menzies] wanted before committing themselves on an issue.⁸

Former Minister in Menzies governments, R. G. Casey, who was not on good terms with Menzies, also referred in his diary to the PM's inability to make-up his mind on issues. On Cabinet, Casey noted: "The larger matters of policy he keeps in his own hands & does not consult Cabinet."⁹ One of Australia's most well-known public intellectuals, Donald Horne, saw Menzies simply as a chairman in Australian politics. In his social commentary *The Lucky Country*, Horne wrote that Menzies' "great talent was to preside over events and look as if he knew what they were all about."¹⁰

Others, albeit warm admirers of Menzies, had views to the contrary. Downer wrote that "In no aspect of Menzies' life has he been more misrepresented by commentators than in his conduct in Cabinet." Allegations that Menzies was "imperious and overbearing,"

⁷ Peter Howson, *The Howson Diaries: The Life of Politics*, ed. Don Aitkin (Ringwood, Victoria: The Viking Press, 1984), Sunday 23 January, 203. Emphasis in original.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ R.G. Casey, undated manuscript fragments, cited in W. J. Hudson, *Casey* (Melbourne: Oxford University Press, 1986), 215. Casey was also Menzies' rival for the prime ministership in 1939 following the death of Joseph Lyons; *ibid.*, 104–8.

¹⁰ Donald Horne, *The Lucky Country*, 3rd rev. edn. (Ringwood, Victoria: Penguin Books, 1971), 187.

he stated, are untrue. Menzies “was in no sense a dictator ... His aim was to arrive at a consensus in Cabinet,” with which he would have regular and long meetings.¹¹ Hasluck stated that “A Menzies Cabinet was certainly not a one-man band. As a general rule he allowed discussion to proceed freely.”¹² In his 1988 portrait of Menzies, Bunting wrote that the PM “knew and valued the strength, collectively and individually, of his Cabinet colleagues, and his Public Service advisers, and he always consulted them.”¹³ Bunting elaborated that “pre-eminence,” not domination, best described the PM’s relationship with his Cabinet colleagues, and that Menzies’ specific quality in Cabinet was “leadership: intellectual, political, parliamentary.”¹⁴ Even Beale, Minister for Supply from 1950–58 and Minister for Defence Production from 1956–58, whose regard for the PM he believed was not mutual, wrote:

He never tried to override his cabinet on an important matter of policy to which he knew his colleagues were opposed and he would have been foolish to have attempted to do so, for there were some strong and determined men among his colleagues at that time.¹⁵

In his study of Cabinet under Menzies, historian David Lee determined that the critical views of the PM were “overstated.” Lee concluded that “Coordinated by Menzies, policy was made collegially by the most senior cabinet ministers and the top-level public servants.”¹⁶ He drew these conclusions from examining the records of the

¹¹ Downer, *Six Prime Ministers*, 14–6.

¹² Paul Hasluck, *Sir Robert Menzies* (Carlton, Victoria: Melbourne University Press, 1980), 16. This work was originally delivered as The Daniel Mannix Memorial Lecture to the Newman College Students’ Club at Wilson Hall, University of Melbourne, on 29 June 1979.

¹³ Bunting, *R.G. Menzies*, 58.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 85.

¹⁵ Howard Beale, *This Inch of Time: Memoirs of Politics and Diplomacy* (Carlton, Victoria: Melbourne University Press, 1977), 47, and 100–12 for his reflections on Menzies and their relationship.

¹⁶ Lee, “Cabinet,” 134–5.

Cabinet Secretariat and the Department of Prime Minister, but not the Cabinet notebook, which was then classified.¹⁷ In terms of the Cuban Crisis, the Cabinet notebook demonstrates that Lee's conclusions on Menzies in Cabinet and the policy-making process remain valid. It also substantiates the PM's own claims about his role in Cabinet and his interactions with its members. For instance, there is no evidence in the Cabinet notebook that Menzies behaved like a dictator nor simply presided over Cabinet's discussion of the crisis. As was shown in the previous section, the ministers made important contributions to what was a robust policy discussion. Moreover, the substance and language of Menzies' parliamentary statement demonstrates he heeded their comments. However, the ministers' input on its precise wording would have annoyed Menzies. According to Hasluck, "one thing he found hard to take from his ministers was any attempt to tell him how to draft an announcement."¹⁸ It is worth noting that, according to the Cabinet notebook, Hasluck made no suggestions regarding the wording of Menzies' parliamentary statement on the Cuban Crisis, obviously mindful not to leave the PM chagrined. Further, this section of the notebook reflects what Hasluck considered one of Menzies' "great Prime Ministerial virtues," that after letting each minister express his view, he had the ability to "then disentangle the argument, presenting in his summing-up the points that mattered and those that were secondary and the major questions which Cabinet must first decide."¹⁹ Country Party

¹⁷ Ibid., 124–5.

¹⁸ Hasluck, *Sir Robert Menzies*, 16–7. Beale and Menzies were not close, the former having blamed himself for some of his own discomfort, believing it would have been wiser to have said less and been more tactful. For example, in one Cabinet meeting, Beale suggested finding "a better form of words" for a phrase in a document drafted by Menzies. While the phrase was amended, a colleague later said to Beale, "you bloody fool, don't you know better than to criticize Menzies' literary style? ... Nobody should ever suggest to Bob that there could be a better form of words than his": Beale, *This Inch of Time*, 109–10. See also David Lowe, "Beale, Sir Oliver Howard (1898–1983)," Australian Dictionary of Biography, National Centre of Biography, ANU, <http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/beale-sir-oliver-howard-12187> (published in hardcopy 2007; accessed online 5 October 2015).

¹⁹ Hasluck, *Sir Robert Menzies*, 8–9.

backbencher, Doug Anthony, described Menzies similarly, but went further noting his “extraordinary capacity to synthesise a decision out of all the discussion with which everybody would agree.”²⁰ That Menzies left the meeting shortly after the discussion to draft his parliamentary statement, and on his return, the Cabinet accepted it without change or comment, is testament to the fact that he was able to consolidate his colleagues’ views into a single policy statement on which they all agreed, and as Beale put it, “his great powers of lucid expression and his fastidious choice of words.”²¹

The legend, as Menzies put it, surrounding his Cabinet interactions, specifically regarding the Cuban Crisis, even reached Washington. On 8 July 1963, Menzies met with Kennedy at the White House, having last visited before the crisis on 25 September 1962.



Illustration 3: JFK Library: 1963-07-08 B, AR, AR8009-B, C, “Luncheon in Honor [sic] of the Prime Minister of Australia Robert Gordon Menzies, 1:30PM,” 8 July 1963.

²⁰ Quoted from P. Weller and M. Grattan, *Can Ministers Cope?: Australian Ministers at Work* (Melbourne: Hutchinson, 1981), 129 and cited in Lee, “Cabinet,” 133. See also Beale, *This Inch of Time*, 47.

²¹ Beale, *This Inch of Time*, 47.

The State Department prepared Kennedy for the PM's visit, providing him with the customary briefing paper, background documents, and biographical details of Menzies' travelling party.²² Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs, Averell Harriman, added the following handwritten note at the end of the briefing paper, which was repeated on the covering memorandum for the President:

The Prime Minister believes he was among the first (if not the first) head of government to support the President's stand on Soviet missiles in Cuba last October. He did this without consultation with his Cabinet. The President may wish to recall this.²³

Harriman was misinformed, and subsequently, so was Kennedy. As has been shown, Menzies consulted the Cabinet on the Cuban Crisis, and the Cabinet notebook demonstrates that the Ministers played an active role in developing the Government's policy and eagerly provided input into Menzies' parliamentary statement. With the source and date of Harriman's information unknown, it is not possible to determine whether this misrepresentation endured since the crisis or arose in connection with Menzies' visit. It is also unknown whether the President did in fact recall this in his meeting with the PM.

In terms of Cabinet consultation, Harriman's note would have contradicted correspondence sent from the Menzies Government to the White House. On 23 October

²² John F. Kennedy Presidential Library and Museum (JFK Library): National Security Files (NSF), Countries, Box 8A, Australia General 7/6/63–7/8/63, "Memorandum for Mr. McGeorge Bundy, The White House" from Department of State, Washington, D.C. (Department of State), undated.

²³ JFK Library: NSF, Countries, Box 8A, Australia General 7/6/63–7/8/63, "Memorandum for Mr. McGeorge Bundy, The White House" (with enclosure: "Briefing Paper, Appointment with Sir Robert G. Menzies, Prime Minister of Australia") from Department of State, Washington, D.C. (Department of State), undated. For the White House memorandum, see "Memorandum for the President: Meeting with Sir Robert Menzies, Australian Prime Minister" from M.V. Forrestal, The White House, 8 July 1963, located in the same file.

1962, Menzies wrote to US Ambassador to Australia, Bill Battle, and asked him to transmit a personal message to Kennedy in reply to the President's letter. In that message, Menzies advised Kennedy that he had "acquainted" the Cabinet with the terms of the President's letter and wished to assure him of their support for the resolution the US was proposing to submit to the UN Security Council.²⁴ Therefore, Menzies had informed Kennedy that he had consulted Cabinet regarding the Cuban situation. Battle too was aware.²⁵ Furthermore, as noted earlier in this chapter, some of Australia's major metropolitan newspapers had reported that the Cabinet had discussed the Cuban situation prior to Menzies delivering his statement in Parliament.²⁶

Such misconceptions regarding Menzies in Cabinet have been perpetuated by his biographer, A. W. Martin. As a result of this US visit, Martin claimed that Kennedy knew where Menzies stood on international issues. In support of this, he cited Menzies' Jefferson Oration given days earlier, where the PM expressed Australia's "deep feeling" for the US, not only because "your friendship contributes so greatly to our national security," but because the two nations work for the same free world.²⁷ Martin also cited the White House memorandum, which included Harriman's note.²⁸ This memorandum

²⁴ NAA: A1838, 262/12/8/1 Part 1, personal message from Menzies to Battle for Kennedy, 23 October 1962.

²⁵ This is also supported by his oral testimony: William C. Battle interviewed by Dennis O'Brien, Charlottesville, Virginia, 2 March 1970, JFKOH-WCB-02, transcript, John F. Kennedy Oral History collection, JFK Library, paras. 66–7.

²⁶ See n.23.

²⁷ Menzies was the first non-American to deliver the oration: Martin, *Robert Menzies*, 465–6. For a transcript of the oration, which also includes a hyperlink to a video of it, see "The Battle for Freedom—Jefferson Oration – By Sir Robert Menzies, The Prime Minister of Australia—Delivered at Monticello, Charlottesville, Virginia, July 4, 1963," Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, Australian Government, <http://pmtranscripts.dpmc.gov.au/browse.php?did=764> (accessed 4 May 2015).

²⁸ Martin, *Robert Menzies* (1999), 465–6. Martin provided a shortened citation for this memorandum: "Kennedy Library, NSF, box 8." His earlier reference to box 8 cited the files "Australia, 6/6/62–6/15/62 and 3/16/63–7/5/63," which do not contain either Harriman's note or the memorandum. The correct citation for these records is at n.48.

was not the ideal evidence for Martin to employ, but he was not to know: the Cabinet notebook was then closed and it would be over a decade before it would be declassified.²⁹ Nonetheless, Martin's use of this memorandum has, until now, perpetuated the misrepresentation that Menzies did not consult the Cabinet on the Cuban Crisis, and more generally.

Menzies himself may be responsible for such misconceptions regarding Cabinet consultation during the Cuban Crisis. It was the PM who discussed the Cabinet's deliberations on the crisis with people outside of the Cabinet. In doing so, he exaggerated his role, probably to assert his pre-eminence, to use Bunting's phrase. At The Daniel Mannix Memorial Lecture in 1987, Liberal Party backbencher, Malcolm Fraser, stated "I heard him tell a story once of a debate within his own cabinet during the Cuban Missile Crisis;" Fraser's choice of words indicate that he was not Menzies' sole audience. Fraser's recollection of that story is worth quoting at length:

²⁹ In May 2010, changes to the *Archives Act 1983* saw the closed period of Cabinet notebooks shortened from 50 to 30 years. The change has been phased in with the closed period reducing by three years annually until 2020: "Cabinet notebooks – Fact sheet 128," NAA, <http://www.naa.gov.au/collection/fact-sheets/fs128.aspx> (accessed 22 July 2014).

The cabinet had been called together and he asked advice. Many views were put, none having a very clear view of the course Australia should take. If there is a clash between the United States and Soviet Union, did we want to be involved; is the United States right; will she have enough courage to stand; should we be urging caution.

After a considerable and lengthy debate, as I heard the story, Menzies put his own view. It was simply that this was a major crisis between east and west. The Soviet Union was taking provocative actions in an area of close and paramount interest to the United States. The United States had thrown down the gauntlet. How then were the interests of the free world to be preserved and best protected? What had to be achieved? Clearly the Russian ships with missiles destined for Cuba, had to turn around if the interests of the free world were to be maintained.

What would best achieve that, isolation of the United States or letting it be known to the world that America's allies stood fair square with America on the issue and that if anyone wanted to take on America, they would be taking on America with her friends and allies. Give America courage to stand firm and let it be known that America's allies were with her, that was the only way Australia could contribute to the issue and to the protection of her own interests. Any other course would have positively damaged our interests.¹

According to Fraser, Menzies had indicated that there was considerable debate on the crisis; his colleagues were unclear as to the course that Australia should take; and thus it was Menzies who put forth his view that the Government should stand firmly with the US, thus determining Australia's policy. For Fraser, Australia declaring its support for the US was the only course to be taken in its interests. The emphasis, according to Fraser, that Menzies placed on the importance of Australia maintaining Western solidarity was evident in Menzies' parliamentary statement. However, other aspects of the Cabinet's deliberations on the crisis were not accurately portrayed. The Cabinet notebook demonstrates that there was considerable discussion, but not debate, and that there was consensus among Menzies' Cabinet colleagues that Australia should support the US. As has been shown, it was the extent of that support that was deliberated, and it

¹ Malcolm Fraser, "The Daniel Mannix Memorial Lecture — Sir Robert Menzies: In Search of Balance," transcript of lecture delivered at Wilson Hall, University of Melbourne, 30 July 1987, <http://www.unimelb.edu.au/malcolmfraser/speeches/nonparliamentary/mannixmenzies.html> (accessed 5 April 2010).

was Barwick, not Menzies, who led that discussion. When Menzies put his view—or at least attempted to, given the enthusiastic interjections of members—he drew on the perspectives of his Cabinet colleagues in developing his parliamentary statement. Menzies did not, as the PM seemed to have implied and Fraser recounted, “put his own view” and therefore determine the Government’s policy on the crisis in the absence of genuine consultation with the Cabinet. Further, Fraser’s account of Menzies’ story suggests that the decision to support the US was reflexive and that there was little to consider in determining the Government’s policy on the crisis. While support for the US was considered imperative, the extent of that support, as this chapter will continue to demonstrate, was measured.

Menzies also exaggerated his role in Cabinet and Australia’s support for the US in the crisis to Battle. The Ambassador recalled the Australian Cabinet’s deliberations on the situation in his oral history, indicating that the PM had also discussed it with him. Battle stated:

[Menzies] had a cabinet meeting right after Kennedy’s speech and had made up his mind where he was going. It was in support of the President. And one of his ministers raised the question at that meeting, “Shouldn’t we wait to see what England does? England hasn’t taken a position on this. Shouldn’t we wait to see what the Cabinet there does?” His position was, “Absolutely not. If we act affirmatively, it will make it more difficult for them to do anything else.”²

Demonstrating his sagacity as a tactician, here Menzies’ strategy was to emphasise to the US, who regarded him as “a fervent Anglophile,”³ that he personally did not hesitate

² Battle interviewed by O’Brien, 2 March 1970, paras. 66–7.

³ JFK Library: NSF, Countries, Box 8A, Australia General 7/6/63–7/8/63, “Memorandum for Mr. McGeorge Bundy, The White House” (with enclosure: biographic sketch, “Menzies, Sir Robert Gordon, Australia, Prime Minister”) from Department of State, undated.

to support the President in his stand on the Cuban Crisis; the views of his Government's other great and powerful friend were irrelevant. However, the Cabinet notebook reveals that Menzies did not dismiss McEwen's suggestion to obtain the British Cabinet's view. As show below, the British view was in fact sought, but not received, before Menzies delivered his statement to Parliament.

Following the Cabinet meeting—but by then only an hour before Menzies addressed Parliament—Ralph Harry contacted Allan J. Eastman, Senior Australian External Affairs Representative in London from 1962–65, for the British Cabinet's reactions. He was specifically instructed to obtain British reactions on the quarantine and on Kennedy's declaration of retaliatory action against a Soviet attack (a launch of missiles from Cuba against any state in the Western Hemisphere). But as it was the middle of the night there, Harry did not receive a reply until that evening.⁴ The Australian Government therefore independently and unilaterally declared its position.

There are three points worth noting here. First, the Government determined that it was more important to swiftly declare its support for the US in the crisis than wait and review the British position. Second, it is possible that ignorance of the British position influenced some ministers to recommend that the Government formulate a narrow policy on the crisis. But as this thesis demonstrates, the other concerns officials held provided sufficient reason for doing so. Third, it is significant that Harry, rather than a

⁴ NAA: A1838, 262/12/8/1 Part 1, record of telephone conversation, Harry to Allan J. Eastman, 23 October 1962. For more on Allan Eastman, see Allan Eastman interviewed by J.D.B. Miller, 2, 3 and 8 August 1977, ORAL TRC 553, National Library of Australia, Canberra.

member of the Prime Minister's Department, contacted the London-based Australian official. In this period, the Australian High Commission, London, was still the responsibility of the Department of Prime Minister.⁵ This is a further evidence that External Affairs was primarily in charge of managing Australia's response to the Cuban Crisis.

Fraser's and Battle's accounts emphasise Menzies' concern for his reputation and blatant disregard for Cabinet confidentiality.⁶ While these two examples do not suggest he dominated Cabinet, they do a disservice to the collaborative and collegial approach he advocated in *The Measure of the Years*, and evident in the Cabinet notebook. Consequently, Menzies' disclosures regarding the Cabinet's deliberation of the Cuban Crisis have resulted in that discussion, until now, being misrepresented.

Regarding the claim that Menzies was perhaps the first head of government to express support for Kennedy's stand on the Cuban Crisis, it was the US that had in fact encouraged the PM's supposed belief. Deputy Director of the State Department's Office of Southwest Pacific Affairs, David Cuthell, told the Washington Embassy that Menzies' statement was the first one received; the Departments of External Affairs and

⁵ Responsibility for administering the Australian High Commission, London, was not handed over from the PM to the Minister for Foreign Affairs until 1 November 1972: Department of Foreign Affairs, "Government to Review Australian High Commission, London," press release, no. M/35, 20 February 1973, <http://pmtranscripts.dpmc.gov.au/sites/default/files/original/00002822.pdf> (accessed 23 November 2015).

⁶ For more on the confidentiality of Cabinet discussions, see "Cabinet notebooks – Fact sheet 128," NAA, <http://www.naa.gov.au/collection/fact-sheets/fs128.aspx> (accessed 22 July 2014).

PM were promptly informed.⁷ Battle was of the same understanding. He recalled: “I think he was the first one to cable in complete support. I don’t know how the cables were received, but I’m sure that, because of the timing and so on, his government was right a [*sic*] the top in their support.”⁸

Some of Menzies’ contemporaries also believed that the PM was among the first, possibly the first, to support Kennedy’s stand on the Cuban Crisis. Reflecting on Menzies’ parliamentary statement, an assistant secretary in the Department of External Affairs, William Forsyth, stated:

Menzies seized the whole matter, told the House that he had a statement of very great importance to make, and as it turned out, I think Australia was the first — I suppose because of the time whereas in London they were just going to bed, I suppose, or had been in bed — and he made a brilliant short statement which is on the record.⁹

Fraser was of a similar impression. At The Daniel Mannix Memorial Lecture he stated:

“Menzies was among the first, perhaps the first international leader to support the United States in her action.”¹⁰

Menzies certainly was *among* the first to declare *publicly* his Government’s support for Kennedy’s stand on the Cuban Crisis. But he was *not* the first: Menzies was outpaced

⁷ NAA: A1838, 262/12/8/1 Part 1, inward cablegram (I.26358), Australian Embassy, Washington to Department of External Affairs (copied to Department of Prime Minister), 23 October 1962.

⁸ Battle interviewed by O’Brien, 2 March 1970, para. 67.

⁹ William Douglass Forsyth interviewed by Mel Pratt, “Mel Pratt Collection,” Canberra, January–February 1972, OH ORAL TRC 121/27, transcript, Oral History and Folklore collection, National Library of Australia (NLA), 289.

¹⁰ Malcolm Fraser, “The Daniel Mannix Memorial Lecture.”

by New Zealand Prime Minister, Keith Holyoake. On 23 October 1962 at 1:00 p.m. (New Zealand Time), Holyoake issued a press statement in support of the US. This was only one hour after Kennedy's broadcast, and more than four hours before Menzies addressed Parliament.¹¹ Whether Holyoake was in fact *the* first leader to publicly declare his country's support for the US, however, remains unclear. Seemingly, the Australian Embassy in Washington was quicker to bring its statement to the attention of the US State Department, hence Cuthell's comment. However, it is worth recalling that despite this discussion over who was first to *publicly* declare support for the US, some Western allies, as outlined in the previous chapter, pledged their support sooner *privately*, courtesy of having had greater advance notice of the crisis. Nevertheless, as Battle and Forsyth suggested, the Cuban Crisis was an occasion where time differences worked to Australia's and New Zealand's advantage.

Finally, the speed at which a government expresses support for an ally in a crisis situation can be a consideration in the policy-making process and in its general management of that alliance. One well-known example involving Australia was its offer of ground troops for the UN coalition force led by the US in South Korea in 1950. Then Minister for External Affairs, Percy Spender, who was one of the strongest advocates for closer Australian defence and economic ties with the US, learnt that the UK was going to offer ground troops. Anticipating that an offer by Australia too would be made

¹¹ Keith Holyoake, "Cuba: Statement by the Prime Minister, 23 October 1962," *New Zealand External Affairs Review*, 12/10 (1962), 38–9. The timing of the statement is clarified in Holyoake's cablegram to selected New Zealand representatives abroad: ANZ: Cuba: Political Affairs – General [10/62–10/62], ABHS 950 W4627/4461 399/4/1 3, "Press statement: Cuba," 23 October 1962. I am grateful to Lyndon Burford for providing, and assisting with, these references. In terms of Harriman's handwritten note to Kennedy discussed earlier, it is possible that he had Menzies and Holyoake confused. Holyoake, who also swiftly declared his Government's support for the US in the crisis, seemingly did not consult his Cabinet.

but subsequently with underwhelming effect, Spender beat the British to the punch.¹² Strongly encouraged by the Secretary of the Department of External Affairs, Alan Watt,¹³ Spender was able to convince a very reluctant Acting PM Arthur Fadden to announce Australia's commitment of a small contingent of ground troops, and manage the reaction of Menzies who was incommunicado at sea en route to New York. Once Menzies' anger subsided—he received the news by radio phone after the fact—he capitalised on the Australian commitment in his speeches and meetings on his US visit.¹⁴ “Fast footwork,” wrote historian Peter Edwards, “ensured that Australia impressed the Americans” and “it proved a vital step in Australian-American relations.”¹⁵ For when the crisis deteriorated dramatically following Chinese intervention late in 1950, Spender was able to press for a security treaty with the US,¹⁶ which following Australian goodwill and tough negotiation by Spender and his Department, resulted in the ANZUS Treaty of 1951. In the words of the official historian of Australia's involvement in the Korean War, Robert O'Neill, it was “one of [Australia's] rare significant crises of choice in the conduct of relations with its two major allies.”¹⁷

¹² David Lowe, *Australian Between Empires: The Life of Percy Spender* (London: Pickering & Chatto, 2010), 134.

¹³ Garry Woodard, “Watt, Sir Alan Stewart (1901–1988),” Australian Dictionary of Biography, National Centre of Biography, ANU, <http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/watt-sir-alan-stewart-15844> (published in hardcopy 2012; accessed online 19 July 2015).

¹⁴ Lowe, *Australian Between Empires*, 134.

¹⁵ Peter Edwards, *Arthur Tange: Last of the Mandarins* (Crows Nest, New South Wales (NSW): Allen & Unwin, 2006), 56–7.

¹⁶ Australia's commitment was also quicker than New Zealand: *ibid.*, 57.

¹⁷ Robert O'Neill, *Australia in the Korean War 1950–53, Volume I: Strategy and Diplomacy* (Canberra: The Australian War Memorial and the Australian Government Publishing Service, 1981), 76.

Former Cabinet Minister in the Hawke and Keating Governments from 1983–96 and Foreign Minister from 1988–96, Gareth Evans, acknowledged that the speed at which a government expresses support for an ally during a crisis can go both ways. A prompt expression of support for the US for example, can gain you brownie points, but pause can give you opportunity.¹⁸ During the Cuban Crisis, the Menzies Government tried to strike a balance between the two. By swiftly declaring its support for the US in the crisis, the Government attempted to win political capital with the Kennedy Administration, just as it had done with the US in 1950. But in contrast, it was less willing, and it kept its support narrow in order to keep its options open as the situation unfolded. Clearly, Harriman’s suggestion to Kennedy that he recall Menzies’ prompt support on the crisis when he met with the PM, and that Australia was the first to cable its support, demonstrates that the speed at which Australia acted had a positive effect on its alliance with the US.

Barwick and the Department of External Affairs

In all major policy matters, “the prime minister is the voice of the government and its leading exponent and debater, attracting the major attention of the press and other media.”¹⁹ By virtue of being PM and having announced the Government’s position on the Cuban situation, Australia’s management of the crisis has been attributed to Menzies. As has been demonstrated, Australian newspapers and the Kennedy

¹⁸ Gareth Evans, conversation with author, 10 January 2015 at Re-assessing the Global Nuclear Order: Past, Present and Future (conference), Globalism Research Centre, RMIT University, and The Nuclear Studies Research Initiative, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Melbourne, Australia, 8–10 January 2015.

¹⁹ Beale, *This Inch of Time*, 46.

Administration's reaction to Menzies' visit in 1963 make this plain. However, declassified government records reveal that he played a minor role.²⁰ Because it was an international matter, it was Barwick, as Minister for External Affairs, and his senior advisers, who led Australia's response. The following background discussion on Barwick, his handling of the External Affairs portfolio, and his interactions with the Department, provides the necessary context in which to examine how Australia's policy on the crisis was developed and managed.

Barwick entered parliament in 1958 as the Member for Parramatta, a blue ribbon Liberal seat vacated by Howard Beale following his appointment as Australian Ambassador to the US. John Howard, later Australian PM, wrote that on entering politics, "Barwick was already something of a Liberal legend"; he was widely regarded as Australia's most accomplished barrister.²¹ For Barwick, who held no specific political ambitions, the decision to stand for the seat at a by-election was a difficult one.²² Citing Barwick's memoir, Martin claimed that it was his friend Menzies who was chiefly responsible for enticing him to nominate for Parramatta.²³ But Barwick made it clear that even after he discussed the nomination with the PM, who was more of an acquaintance, he continued to deliberate on the decision over several days, and

²⁰ The poor health of the PM may have been a contributing factor in his disengagement from this issue. From late 1962 until well into the New Year, Menzies was stricken with a bout of diverticulitis and fatigue. He was also apart from his beloved wife, Pattie, who due to ill health, had remained in London following the Prime Minister's conference in mid-September to have her tonsils removed. Pattie was still in London at the time of the Cuban Crisis: Martin, *Robert Menzies*, 463.

²¹ John Howard, *The Menzies Era: The years that shaped modern Australia* (Sydney: HarperCollins Publishers, 2014), 114–5 and 273. Barwick would eventually return to the law. In April 1964, he became Chief Justice of the High Court of Australia and is the longest-serving incumbent: *ibid.*, 276.

²² Garfield Barwick, *A Radical Tory: Garfield Barwick's Reflections and Recollections* (Sydney: The Federation Press, 1995), ch.8.

²³ Martin, *Robert Menzies*, 369.

conferred further with a colleague and his immediate family.²⁴ A fellow barrister, Menzies likely put forth a strong case, but Martin overemphasised Menzies' role. Barwick, who described himself as "set in my ways and used to following my own paths, perhaps too insensitive to the attitudes of others,"²⁵ ultimately made-up his own mind. This independence of mind served him well as an advocate and, as shown below, was appreciated by those in External Affairs.

Eager to have Barwick on the front bench, a man whose legal talents and powers of exposition he clearly admired,²⁶ Menzies appointed him Attorney-General in the ministry reshuffle following the November election.²⁷ At the next election in December 1961, Barwick inherited the External Affairs portfolio from Menzies, which, for a time, he held concurrently with the Attorney-General's portfolio. Menzies had previously offered External Affairs to Barwick following Richard Casey's resignation in February 1960, but because of legislation in train, Barwick wanted to continue on as Attorney-General. Menzies, himself aware of the onerous workload of two portfolios, was then reluctant to burden Barwick with External Affairs, concerned that it would jeopardise his health.²⁸ Now Menzies agreed with Barwick's suggestion that he take on the two portfolios following the appointment of two assistant ministers to help with routine

²⁴ Barwick, *A Radical Tory*, 102–4.

²⁵ Ibid., 109.

²⁶ Downer, *Six Prime Ministers*, 21.

²⁷ Martin, *Robert Menzies*, 377.

²⁸ Ibid., 437. Menzies' concern for Barwick's health was general in nature: Barwick never told him that he had been diagnosed with an advanced state of diabetes in 1956. Only Barwick's immediate family was aware of his condition. The potential for the stress of political life to affect his health weighed heavily on Barwick in deciding whether to contest the by-election: Barwick, *A Radical Tory*, 98–9, 102 and 104.

work.²⁹ Given Menzies' heavy workload and "chequered" experience as External Affairs Minister, he was most likely relieved to pass the responsibility to Barwick, however much he enjoyed performing on the world stage.³⁰ Consequently, Australia faced the mounting international problems of the early 1960s—including the Cuban Crisis—without a full-time Minister for External Affairs.³¹

Menzies had long ago determined that Barwick was suitable to be External Affairs Minister. He had gained experience in the role acting in his predecessors' absence and by leading the Australian delegation to the UN General Assembly in 1960.³² That Menzies was grooming Barwick for the position was further suggested by the PM's insistence in 1960 that on his return home following business in London, Barwick take a leisurely tour through Southeast Asia.³³ According to Barwick, Menzies had asked him to obtain the opinions of Asian and Southeast Asian leaders on Indonesian President, Sukarno, and his claim to West New Guinea.³⁴ In the view of many official and unofficial Australian observers, Sukarno was then "becoming perilously dependent on the support of the Indonesian communist party (the PKI) to maintain himself in power." According to Coral Bell, who was described as "Australia's most distinguished

²⁹ Barwick, *A Radical Tory*, 165.

³⁰ Martin, *Robert Menzies*, 437.

³¹ Peter Edwards with Gregory Pemberton, *Crises and Commitments: The Politics and Diplomacy of Australia's Involvement in Southeast Asian Conflicts 1948–1965*. The Official History of Australia's Involvement in Southeast Asian Conflicts 1948–1975 (North Sydney: Allen & Unwin in association with the Australian War Memorial, 1992), 229.

³² Garry Woodard, "'A Radical Tory': Sir Garfield Barwick, 1961–64," in *Ministers, Mandarins and Diplomats: Australian Foreign Policy Making, 1941–1969*, Joan Beaumont, Christopher Waters, David Lowe, with Garry Woodard, eds. (Carlton, Victoria: Melbourne University Press, 2003), 106–7. For Barwick's recollections on that General Assembly, see *A Radical Tory*, 162–4.

³³ Martin, *Robert Menzies*, 437.

³⁴ Barwick, *A Radical Tory*, 168.

analyst of contemporary international politics,”³⁵ the years 1958 to 1965 were “a major period of gathering alarm in Canberra” and alarm concentrated primarily on Indonesia.³⁶ The insight Barwick gained on Sukarno and West New Guinea and other key issues in light of this tour proved, according to Martin, “to fit him extraordinarily well for policymaking in an area about which Cabinet expertise was weak.”³⁷ He would put it to use immediately.

After he was sworn in, Barwick was briefed at the Department on current issues; West New Guinea was the most pressing matter. For a decade, Australia had supported Dutch control of the territory.³⁸ In late 1961, a Dutch initiative for West New Guinea to determine its future under an UN-supervised plebiscite, sparked much diplomatic activity but no agreed outcome. Around the same time, Sukarno made increasingly belligerent statements, indicating he would seize the territory by force.³⁹ However, the Americans and the British saw Western relations with Indonesia as paramount to the Dutch position in West New Guinea. If Indonesia used force, the US and UK would not support the Dutch militarily. Their strategy was to try to persuade the Dutch to accept the seemingly inevitable Indonesian takeover. Reflecting on the American position, historian David Lowe wrote:

³⁵ “Dr Coral Bell AO,” Coral Bell School of Asia Pacific Affairs, Australian National University (ANU) College of Asia & the Pacific, ANU, <http://bellschool.anu.edu.au/about-us/dr-coral-bell-ao> (accessed 11 July 2017).

³⁶ Coral Bell, *Australia's Alliance Options: Prospect and Retrospect in a World of Change* (Canberra: The Australian Foreign Policy Publications Program, ANU, 1991), 30.

³⁷ Martin, *Robert Menzies*, 437. For Barwick's reflections on his meetings with leaders on this tour, see *Radical Tory*, 168–72.

³⁸ Edwards, *Arthur Tange*, 130–1.

³⁹ Edwards, *Crises and Commitments*, 230.

The Americans may have shared the Australians' apprehensions about the growth of the anti-colonial Afro-Asian bloc in the UN in the mid-1950s, but they did not share Australia's imperial history, and were prepared to be flexible to win favour with the so-called 'un-committed' nations in the Cold War, such as Indonesia.⁴⁰

Barwick was quick to recognise the limits of ANZUS. After just three weeks as Minister for External Affairs, he convinced Menzies and the Cabinet to change its policy on West New Guinea:⁴¹ in the interest of it too securing good relations with Indonesia, Australia would support moves in the UN to transfer control of the territory to it.⁴² Barwick's long submissions to Cabinet on 11 and 12 January 1962 reflected his own standpoint and seemingly his acceptance of the advice of Tange and the Department, which for some time, had been unsuccessfully pressing on Menzies such views. In addition to Barwick's initiative and skilled advocacy based on the departmental briefs, it is likely that a letter to Menzies from Macmillan dated 27 December 1961 in which the British and American positions were made plain, helped to convince the Cabinet of the need to rethink Australian policy.⁴³ On 12 January 1962 regarding Cabinet's decision, Menzies stated:

Having regard not only to our treaty rights and responsibilities but also to the hard facts of international life, we act in close consultation with the great free powers, particularly Great Britain and the United States of America. No responsible Australian would wish to see any action affecting the safety of Australia on the issues of war or peace in this area except in concert with our great and powerful friends.⁴⁴

⁴⁰ David Lowe, *Percy Spender and the American Century*, The Trevor Reese Memorial Lecture, Carl Bridge, series ed., (London: Menzies Centre for Australian Studies, King's College London, 2002), 35; and repeated in Lowe, *Australian Between Empires*, 159.

⁴¹ Edwards, *Arthur Tange*, 130–1.

⁴² Edwards, *Crises and Commitments*, 230.

⁴³ Edwards, *Arthur Tange*, 130–1.

⁴⁴ Department of External Affairs, *Current Notes on International Affairs* (Current Notes), vol. 33, no. 1, January 1962, 41–2. This is also referred to in Edwards, *Crises and Commitments*, 230–1.

Previously, Menzies had referred proudly to the strength and support provided by Australia's most important allies. Now, Edwards observed, "he was admitting that there were costs associated with depending on allies for one's security."⁴⁵ In the months that followed, Australia watched on while the US effectively led diplomatic efforts for a peaceful transfer of West New Guinea from the Netherlands to Indonesia, resulting in the signing of a formal agreement in August.⁴⁶ By October, the Menzies Government would again find itself reflecting on the US alliance, this time in relation to the Cuban Crisis.

In his short time as External Affairs Minister, Barwick had successfully advocated a new policy towards Indonesia. This, as well as his personal qualities and work ethic, quickly earned him the respect and confidence of his Department, especially its Secretary, Arthur Tange, with whom he had a strong working relationship. Tange had been permanent head of the Department since 1954, a position he held until 1965 when he became High Commissioner to India and non-resident Ambassador to Nepal. On return to Australia in early 1970, he served as Secretary of the Department of Defence until age resulted in his compulsory retirement in 1979. Tange is widely regarded as the last of the great mandarins of the public service.⁴⁷ The tribute of Stephen Smith, Minister for Foreign Affairs from 2007–10, is most fitting: "Tange was an outstanding

⁴⁵ Edwards, *Crises and Commitments*, 231.

⁴⁶ Under the agreement, West New Guinea was to be handed over to Indonesia in 1963, with provision for an act of self-determination to be carried out by 1969: *ibid.*

⁴⁷ Edwards, *Arthur Tange*, *passim*. This is also reflected in the biography's sub-title, *Last of the Mandarins*. See also Peter Edwards, "Sir Arthur Tange: Departmental Reformer," in *The Seven Dwarfs and the Age of the Mandarins: Australian Government Administration in the Post-War Reconstruction Era*, Samuel Furphy, ed. E-book (Canberra: Australian National University Press, 2015), 233–40; and for example, the praise given to Tange by former diplomat and Secretary of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Philip Flood, and Malcolm Fraser cited in Howard, *The Menzies Era*, 366.

leader and strategic thinker, clear-eyed, principled and effective in both defining and advancing Australian national interests.”⁴⁸ Tange served at a time when public servants were permitted significant independence and influence;⁴⁹ the *Sydney Morning Herald* listed him among the 100 most influential Australians of the twentieth century.⁵⁰ In his biography of Tange, Edwards wrote that of the three External Affairs ministers Tange served in the early 1960s, it was Barwick with whom he possibly achieved the most success, having played an important role in shaping Australian foreign policy towards Indonesia over the West New Guinea dispute and later Confrontation.⁵¹ The Cuban Crisis was another key episode.

Tange and his colleagues saw Barwick as a strong minister with his own convictions, but one who consulted and listened to his advisers and gave clear policy directions.⁵² As Ralph Harry, a senior official in External Affairs, recorded in one of his memoirs, “Barwick brought to the Department [...] the lawyer’s skill at mastering his brief, and a great capacity for infighting in Cabinet on behalf of Department objectives and projects.”⁵³ Barwick’s ability to win battles against other ministers and departments, including Menzies and the Department of Prime Minister, gave Tange and his colleagues great confidence. In contrast to most ministers, who used their offices at

⁴⁸ The Hon Stephen Smith MP, “Building Momentum: Australia, Nuclear Non-Proliferation and Disarmament,” Tange Lecture, 12 August 2009, http://www.foreignminister.gov.au/speeches/2009/090812_tange.html (accessed 23 January 2015).

⁴⁹ Edwards, *Arthur Tange*, ix–x.

⁵⁰ Tony Stephens, “The most influential Australians,” *Sydney Morning Herald*, 22 January 2001, cited in Edwards, *Arthur Tange*, 263.

⁵¹ Edwards, *Arthur Tange*, 114 and 130–7.

⁵² *Ibid.*, 131–2.

⁵³ Ralph Harry, *The Diplomat who Laughed* (Richmond, Victoria: Hutchinson of Australia, 1983), 49–50. See also Ralph Harry, *No Man Is a Hero: Pioneers of Australian Diplomacy* (Sydney: Arts Management, 1997), 144 and 153.

Parliament, Barwick worked from the minister's office in the Department. He roamed the corridors, striking up debates on issues with officials, who appreciated his robust and happy disposition and "shirt-sleeves" approach to the day-to-day management of Australia in world affairs.⁵⁴ While Barwick was late to enter politics in 1958 at the age of 54,⁵⁵ his timing would prove impeccable. He entered External Affairs after Tange had implemented significant administrative reforms, making it an effective and professional foreign office and solidifying it as a key department in Canberra's bureaucracy.⁵⁶ It also meant "he was not shackled by old policies that had reached the end of their shelf life," and was thus "a policy innovator and moderniser," wrote former Australian diplomat, Garry Woodard.⁵⁷ While Australia's relationship with Indonesia, specifically over West New Guinea, was the case in point, Edwards claimed that Barwick was otherwise less eager than his predecessors "to rethink and reshape the fundamentals of Australian policy." According to Edwards:

Barwick's tenure of the External Affairs portfolio was generally marked by a vigorous and determined effort to seek longstanding goals by familiar means, not to formulate a new vision. At the top of the list of goals was the desire to see Australia closely associated with the United States in efforts to preserve the security of non-communist states in Southeast Asia.⁵⁸

As shown in the next chapter, Barwick and Tange's contemplation of nuclear weapons and Australian defence reflect an attempt to achieve those goals.

⁵⁴ Edwards, *Arthur Tange*, 131–2.

⁵⁵ Barwick, *A Radical Tory*, 96.

⁵⁶ Edwards, *Arthur Tange*, 114.

⁵⁷ Woodard, "'A Radical Tory'," 107.

⁵⁸ Edwards, *Crises and Commitments*, 229–30. The US alliance and constructive engagement in post-colonial Southeast Asia had been the principal concerns of the Department under Spender and Casey: Richard Broinowski, *Fact or Fission?: the truth about Australia's nuclear ambitions* (Carlton North, Victoria: Scribe Publications, 2003), 37.

The Cuban Crisis and **Australian Nuclear Ambitions**

Barwick and Tange were concerned about the potential effect of the Cuban Crisis on Australia's defence, and particularly future Australian-American cooperation over missile bases. Their consideration of this issue at 9:45 a.m. on 23 October 1962, and therefore prior to the Cabinet meeting,¹ was probably behind Barwick's concern "to avoid implications agst. [against] US. [*sic*] bases", which he expressed to Cabinet later that morning.² Tange sent a minute of the discussion to the following four External Affairs officials: his two most senior officials, Ralph Harry and Bill Forsyth; China specialist, Hugh Dunn; and head of the Economic and Social section in the UN Branch, Robert Robertson.³ In his minute of their discussion, Tange noted that in light of the Cuban situation, he and the Minister had drawn several conclusions regarding foreign bases.⁴ These were later repeated verbatim as "points for consideration" in a secret paper titled "Cuba Crisis" that the Department had drafted for Barwick.⁵

¹ The meeting was scheduled in Barwick's diary, but was preceded by a question mark: NAA, Sydney: M3943, 1, [Papers of Sir Garfield Barwick] Diaries, 1962 appointment diary (small size) of Garfield Barwick, 23 October 1962. However, Tange confirmed in his minute that the meeting occurred "this morning": NAA: A1838, 262/12/8/1 part 1, Minute, Tange to Harry, Forsyth, Dunn and Robertson, 23 October 1962.

² National Archives of Australia, Canberra (NAA): A11099, 1/59, Cabinet notebook, 23 October 1962.

³ NAA: A1838, 262/12/8/1 part 1, Minute, Tange to Harry, Forsyth, Dunn and Robertson, 23 October 1962. I am grateful to James Dunn, who in 1962 was the Australian Consul to Portuguese Timor, for confirming that the "Dunn" to which Tange referred was Hugh Dunn: James Dunn, email to author, 25 October 2015. For more on Hugh Dunn, see Alexander Downer (former Minister for Foreign Affairs), "Hugh Dunn," media release FA141, 13 November 2005, http://foreignminister.gov.au/releases/2005/fa141_05.html (accessed 11 July 2017). I am also grateful to Matthew Jordan, Historical Publications and Research Unit, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, for information that assisted me to identify the "Robertson" to which Tange referred as Robert Robertson: Matthew Jordan, email to author, 2 September 2015.

⁴ NAA: A1838, 262/12/8/1 part 1, Minute, Tange to Harry, Forsyth, Dunn and Robertson, 23 October 1962.

⁵ NAA: A1838, 262/12/8/1 part 1, "Cuba Crisis," draft paper for the Minister, undated.

For many years, Tange wrote, the Soviet Union had objected to “bases with an offensive capacity” and had constantly called for their dismantling. In light of US pronouncements, Barwick and Tange concluded:

We should consider carefully the concept that the presence of such bases and weapons on Cuban soil represents an act of Soviet aggression (the President said that any nuclear missile launched from Cuba would be treated as an attack by the Soviet Union on the United States requiring full retaliation).⁶

Barwick and Tange believed the Soviet Union would make much of US claims, and would compare their weapons in Cuba with, for example, US nuclear weapons in Turkey. Barwick and Tange were also aware that US Secretary of State, Dean Rusk, had recently shown Soviet Foreign Minister, Andrei Gromyko, the locations of American bases in Europe. They felt that the US may therefore need to emphasise Soviet “deception” and “secrecy” regarding the base in Cuba. Furthermore, Barwick and Tange thought it probable that a resolution condemning foreign bases “of all kinds” would be moved in the UN General Assembly.⁷

Reflecting on such views on foreign bases and offensive weapons, Barwick and Tange considered Australia’s position. They asserted: “Australia has a distinct interest in preserving the right of powerful allies to put bases and offensive weapons in Australia if we want them.” As shown later in this chapter, the Menzies Government *did* want them. However, Barwick and Tange recognised the potential effect of the Cuban Crisis on such ambitions, as well as the contradictions of this position. The Soviet Union could

⁶ NAA: A1838, 262/12/8/1 part 1, Minute, Tange to Harry, Forsyth, Dunn and Robertson, 23 October 1962.

⁷ Ibid. Emphasis in original.

consider the future installation of American nuclear weapons in Australia as an act of aggression, which could invite a response from the Soviets commensurate with the American response towards Cuba. They concluded:

We are presumably vulnerable to a Soviet blockade (in the name of a 'quarantine') of any American offensive weapons which may be located on Australian soil at some future time and targetted [*sic*] on the Soviet Union.⁸

However, this was a hypothetical scenario to which Barwick and Tange determined: "we presumably cannot allow our policy in the present Cuban matter to be affected by this consideration."⁹ The Minister and Secretary were careful to balance "long-term aspirations with immediate political realities."¹⁰ Australian endorsement of the rights of powerful states to install offensive weapons and bases on the territory of allies, as the Soviets had done in Cuba, would have contradicted US policy on the Cuban Crisis. Ultimately, this could have jeopardised the US alliance on which Australia heavily relied. For Australia, maintaining the US alliance was paramount to the risk of a possible Soviet-imposed quarantine should it one day host American nuclear weapons and bases. Consequently, the Menzies Government's willingness to host American offensive weapons and bases would sit, even if uneasily, alongside condemnation of the Soviet Union.

In addition to providing fascinating insight into a key consideration behind Australia's policy on the Cuban Crisis, there are three other aspects to Tange's minute that merit

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Peter Edwards, *Arthur Tange: Last of the Mandarins* (Crows Nest, New South Wales (NSW): Allen & Unwin, 2006), 268.

discussion: its significance to Australia's nuclear history; its alignment with the Defence Committee's appreciation regarding a nuclear capability for Australia; and its consistency with the Government's reply to a UN inquiry, which contained a clear statement of Australia's policy on nuclear weapons. Each aspect is discussed here in turn.

Tange's minute is highly significant for our understanding of Australia's nuclear history, which has attracted the interest of scholars in the post-Cold War period. In documenting Australia's interest in acquiring nuclear weapons from the 1940s to the early 1970s, scholars have shown how Australia attempted unsuccessfully to procure them from allies, focusing on approaches made to the UK, and to maintain the option to develop an indigenous arsenal.¹¹ In his frequently cited study on Australia's nuclear ambitions, international security scholar, Jim Walsh, documented in detail Australia's attempts to acquire nuclear weapons from the UK: it made its first official request in 1958 for the purchase of tactical nuclear weapons, and the second in 1961 regarding an agreement for nuclear weapons on-demand that would enable Australia to draw on the British

¹¹ For an excellent review of the scholarship on Australia and nuclear weapons to 2013, including discussion of the literature regarding whether Australia actually sought an indigenous nuclear capability or to maintain the *option* of developing one, see Luke Auton, "Opaque Proliferation: The Historiography of Australia's Cold War Nuclear Weapons Option," *History Compass* 11, no. 8 (2013): 561–72. For the key studies on the subject, see: Lachlan Clohesy and Phillip Deery, "The Prime Minister and the Bomb: John Gorton, W.C. Wentworth and the Quest for an Atomic Australia," *Australian Journal of Politics and History* 61, no. 2 (2015): 217–32; Justin Wilson, "Conflicting Interests: Australia and the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, 1968," *War & Society* 20, no. 2 (2002): 107–28; Jacques E.C. Hymans, "Isotopes and Identity: Australia and the Nuclear Weapons Option, 1949–1999," *The Nonproliferation Review* 7, no. 1 (2000): 1–23; Wayne Reynolds, *Australia's Bid for the Atomic Bomb* (Carlton South, Victoria: Melbourne University Press, 2000); Jim Walsh, "Surprise Down Under: The Secret History of Australia's Nuclear Ambitions," *The Nonproliferation Review* 5, no. 1 (1997): 1–20; and Alice Cawte, *Atomic Australia, 1944–1990* (Kensington, NSW: New South Wales University Press, 1992). However, see also: Christine M. Leah, *Australia and the Bomb* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014); Christine Leah and Rod Lyon, "Three visions of the bomb: Australian thinking about nuclear weapons and strategy," *Australian Journal of International Affairs* 64, no. 4 (2010): 449–77; Christopher Hubbard, "From Ambivalence to Influence: Australia and the Negotiation of the 1968 Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty," *Australian Journal of Politics and History* 50, no. 4 (2004): 526–43; and Richard Broinowski, *Fact or Fission?: the truth about Australia's nuclear ambitions* (Carlton North, Victoria: Scribe Publications, 2003).

nuclear weapons stockpile.¹² While the approaches made to the UK are important, they are not discussed here and they form only *a part of* Australia's nuclear story. This section therefore does not claim to be a comprehensive and detailed account of Australia's attempts to acquire nuclear weapons. Rather, it aims to outline the examples in the relevant literature of Australian interest in acquiring *US nuclear weapons* into which Tange's minute may be fitted. Also, unlike the British approaches mentioned above, Tange's minute is an example of Australian interest in US nuclear weapons—not a request for weapons—and therefore it needs to be considered in that context. Also, this discussion does not examine the basis of Australia's interest in acquiring a nuclear capability in terms of evaluating hypotheses on why states do or do not proliferate; while Tange's minute is placed in historical context, the proliferation puzzle has been discussed well and in much detail elsewhere.¹³ Tange's minute is of particular significance to the historiography because it reveals that in 1962, some Australian senior officials had an interest in acquiring—specifically hosting—American nuclear weapons. This thesis demonstrates that this is in contrast to the literature which implies: first, that Australia's interest in acquiring allied nuclear weapons ceased in 1961; second, that Australia was mainly interested in acquiring British nuclear weapons; and third, that acquisition of a nuclear capability entailed either procuring or developing it. In illustrating the significance of Tange's minute in this regard, this thesis brings together the sparse and scattered historiographical remnants of Australian interest in US nuclear weapons from the mid-1950s to the early 1960s. Additionally, in concluding this chapter, some challenges involved in working with this historiography are identified.

¹² Walsh, "Surprise Down Under," 1–9.

¹³ Jim Walsh, "Bombs Unbuilt: Power, Ideas, and Institutions in International Politics," (PhD diss., Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 2000), chs.3–5 (case study on Australia). I am grateful to Jim Walsh for providing me with a copy of his dissertation.

Before exploring this, a very brief outline of Australian governments' perceptions of its security environment and alliances provides the context for Australia's interest in acquiring nuclear weapons.

The threat of Communist expansionism was the overriding security preoccupation of Australian governments in the post-war period. They were fearful that Communist forces would take advantage of instability in Southeast Asia resulting in Australia's neighbours falling to Communism like proverbial dominoes, jeopardising the security of the region, and therefore Australia. Such notions were reflected in the language the Government used to speak about defence. For example, in a speech to Parliament on 4 April 1957, Menzies stated: "It is of immense importance to us that the free countries of South-East Asia should not fall one by one to Communist aggression."¹⁴ It was in this context that from the late 1940s to the early 1970s, Australia pursued policies of containment of, and then forward defence against, Communism in its "near north" committing troops to conflicts in Korea, Malaya, Malaysia (opposing Indonesia's Konfrontasi), and Vietnam. Colloquially, the concept of forward defence was voiced, and accepted, as "better to fight in somebody else's backyard".¹⁵ Concerned with the stability of its region, Australia entered into a number of security agreements in the 1950s. The most important was ANZUS in 1951, which is discussed throughout the thesis and in the next section, specifically regarding the Cuban Crisis. Along with the

¹⁴ R.G. Menzies, *Commonwealth Parliamentary Debates* (CPD), House of Representatives (House), 4 April 1957, http://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/genpdf/hansard80/hansardr80/1957-04-04/0113/hansard_frag.pdf;fileType=application%2Fpdf (accessed 20 July 2015), 1. Menzies is also quoted in Leah, *Australia and the Bomb*, 14.

¹⁵ Harry Rayner, *Scherger: A biography of Air Chief Marshal Sir Frederick Scherger KBE CB DSO AFC* (Canberra: Australian War Memorial, 1984), 150.

UK and New Zealand, Australia also formed the British Commonwealth Far East Strategic Reserve (shortened to Commonwealth Strategic Reserve) in 1955. While the Commonwealth Strategic Reserve was available for force deployment anywhere in Southeast Asia, its primary role was to deal with external threats to Malaya.¹⁶ Furthermore, the Manila Treaty of 1954, which subsequently established the South East Asia Treaty Organisation (SEATO), reflected a commitment by Australia, the US, the UK, France, New Zealand, Thailand, the Philippines, and Pakistan, to defend collectively against perceived Communist aggression in the region.¹⁷ In the view of the Defence Committee—the highest decision-making body of the Department of Defence whose function was to advise the Minister on defence policy and its financial requirements, as well as coordinate the Boards within the Department¹⁸—collective defence arrangements were necessary for Australia did not have the capabilities to defend itself “unaided against the military power of the communist nations.” While SEATO was such an arrangement and the only one for the collective defence of Southeast Asia, the Organisation faced difficulties in reaching unanimous decisions on key issues and developing effective plans in support of general strategic concepts for regional defence. ANZUS therefore was considered to be “potentially the most valuable Treaty” to Australia as it provided “the best available assurance of United States assistance in the event of a threat of actual attack on our territory.” The Defence

¹⁶ Mark Lax, *From Controversy to Cutting Edge: A History of the F-111 in Australian Service* (Canberra: RAAF, Air Power Development Centre, 2010), 8–9.

¹⁷ For more on ‘domino theory’, SEATO, defence policies, and military and alliance commitments in Southeast Asia from 1948–65, see Peter G. Edwards, with Gregory Pemberton, *Crises and Commitments: The Politics and Diplomacy of Australia’s Involvement in Southeast Asian Conflicts 1948–1965*. The Official History of Australia’s Involvement in Southeast Asian Conflicts 1948–1975 (Sydney: Allen & Unwin in association with the Australian War Memorial, 1992).

¹⁸ Stephan Frühling, ed., *A History of Australian Strategic Policy Since 1945* (Canberra: Defence Publishing Service, Department of Defence, 2009), 1; and “How the Commonwealth has managed the defence of Australia: Defence Committee,” NAA, Australian Government, <http://www.naa.gov.au/collection/explore/defence/administration.aspx> (accessed 29 May 2015).

Committee further acknowledged that the West's strength in the Southeast Asian and Pacific region rested "primarily on the availability of formidable United States military power;"¹⁹ so too did Australia's defence. The so-called "domino theory" therefore was closely intertwined with Australia's support for the US alliance. So too was an understanding that future regional conflicts could involve nuclear weapons.

The explosion of the first atomic device and the dropping of the bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki in 1945 saw the dawn of the nuclear age. Shortly after, a nuclear arms race followed, and technological advances in weaponry were made. The destructive capacity of nuclear weapons changed the way people think and states behave.²⁰ It was in this context of a new strategic environment, as well as regional instability, that Australian governments, which were deeply concerned about the Communist threat and its effect on Australia's security, contemplated, and at various times attempted, to acquire or develop a nuclear capability from the late 1940s to the early 1970s.²¹ The

¹⁹ NAA: A4311, 698/2, "Strategic Basis of Australian Defence Policy," endorsed by Defence Committee, 25 January 1962, 10–13, paras. 33–4, 36, 38 and 40. In terms of collective defence, the Defence Committee also referred to Australian, New Zealand and Malayan area (ANZAM), an arrangement between Australia, New Zealand and the UK for the protection of the Malayan area. However, it simply concluded that its main practical value derived from the Strategic Reserve in Malaya/Singapore and the Organisation's activities were mostly directed towards supporting SEATO planning: *ibid.*, 12, para. 37. For more on ANZAM, see David Lee, *Australia and the World in the Twentieth Century* (Beaconsfield, Victoria: Circa, 2006), 98. Despite claims to the contrary, Scherger maintained that SEATO was effective, particularly as "a stabilising influence in the area": Rayner, *Scherger*, 164, and also 149–50.

²⁰ On the revolutionary effect of nuclear weapons on world politics, see Michael Mandelbaum, *The Nuclear Revolution: International Politics before and after Hiroshima* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981); and Robert Jervis, *The Meaning of the Nuclear Revolution: Statecraft and the Prospect of Armageddon* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1989).

²¹ This is not to say, however, that the level of the perceived threat to Australia's security and its nuclear policy correspond nor that Australia's interest in nuclear weapons stemmed only from security threats. The key finding of Walsh's doctoral research in which he analysed 132 nuclear decisions and outcomes (78 related to a case study on Australia) was that the prevailing theory of nuclear behaviour, which is based on external threats to a state and that state's technical capacity, lack evidence. The major critique of this theory, which is that nuclear outcomes are attributable to international norms, is also unsupported. Rather, Walsh found that "influence of institutions and the internal politics of decision making are consistently more important than the power, resources, or ideas for explaining nuclear behaviour, and in particular, for explaining the puzzle of limited proliferation": Walsh, "Bombs Unbuilt," 2–3 and *passim* (chapter three, "Australia, 1954–1996," is modelled closely on his earlier article "Surprise Down Under").

following discussion focuses on Australia's attempts to acquire American nuclear weapons and the relevance of Tange's minute to this historiography, as well as the difficulties Australian governments faced in relying on collective defence arrangements for Australia's security.

Australia had shown interest in gaining access to American nuclear weapons since as early as 1954.²² Australian thinking about nuclear weapons in the 1950s, as in most of Europe and the US, included a belief that nuclear weapons would spread and become a normal feature of modern militaries.²³ The UK had entered the nuclear club in 1952, and France and the People's Republic of China (China) were then also expected to join.²⁴ This expectation and its anticipated effect on Australia could be found in everything from prime ministerial statements to army training manuals.²⁵ In 1954 the US amended its *Atomic Energy Act*, enabling it to station nuclear weapons in NATO member states. J.L. Lawrey, an official in Australia's Washington Embassy, sought confirmation from Special Assistant to the US Secretary of State for Atomic Affairs, Gerard Smith, that Australia would also be "eligible for assistance."²⁶ Lawrey reported that Smith,

²² Cawte, *Atomic Australia*, 106.

²³ Walsh, "Surprise Down Under," 2.

²⁴ France became a nuclear power in 1960, and China, 1964: Cawte, *Atomic Australia*, 112. Regarding the expectation that France and China would become nuclear powers, see Walsh, "Surprise Down Under," 2.

²⁵ Walsh, "Surprise Down Under," 2.

²⁶ Cawte, *Atomic Australia*, 106.

who is of an excessively cautious disposition, did not reply quite as categorically as we would have wished, being doubtless mindful of the fact that Administration legal advisors are still engaged on analysis of the new Act's provisions, but said that in view of the existence of the ANZUS treaty he assumed that there would be no difficulty on this score.²⁷

Some in the intelligence community and the military services would have been encouraged by these developments. In July 1956, Casey noted in his diary that the Director of the Australian Secret Intelligence Service (ASIS), Alfred Brookes, “put the idea to Allen Dulles in Washington of more US concern with Australia by reason of the need for a non-American long-range launching place.” Brookes was close to Dulles, the Director of the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) from 1953 to 1961, who resigned in the months following the botched invasion at Cuba’s Bay of Pigs in April. Regarding this excerpt from Casey’s diary, the authors of the unofficial history of ASIS stated:

It is not clear from the context whether Brookes was offering Australia as a launch-pad for inter-continental ballistic missiles or for aircraft, but either way nuclear weapons would have been involved.²⁸

Against this background of NATO developments, the first option is certainly plausible. Furthermore, the authors noted that another diary entry from Casey referred to a discussion between Brookes and Dulles on “graduated deterrents”—the use of conventional weapons through to nuclear weapons. Clearly, the two officials were discussing nuclear options. Casey concluded, however, that the ASIS Director obtained

²⁷ “J.L. Lawrey, Australian Embassy Washington, report of meeting with Gerard Smith, 22 September 1954, in A5462/1 138/5,” quoted in Cawte, *Atomic Australia*, 106.

²⁸ Brian Toohey and William Pinwill, *Oyster: The Story of the Australian Secret Intelligence Service* (Port Melbourne, Victoria: William Heinemann Australia, 1989), 52.

little hard information from the CIA Director: “He got no light on the basic reason for US interest in Australia.”²⁹

The Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF) would also have seen changes to the US *Atomic Energy Act* as a positive development. Throughout the 1950s, Air Force leaders were strong advocates for an Australian nuclear force based on manned bomber aircraft, as was Minister for Air, Athol Townley.³⁰ On 12 September 1956, Townley wrote to the Minister for Defence, Philip McBride, about the offensive strike capability of the RAAF. He suggested increasing the effectiveness of Australia’s Canberra bomber aircraft by arming it with a “tactical nuclear weapon.” If that was accepted in principle, Townley continued, then it would be logical to acquire “tactical atomic bombs” for the Sabre fighters.³¹ He added:

It will be many years before Australia will be in a position to produce its own nuclear weapons. If, however, supplies of these weapons could be made available from the United States of America, the necessary preparations could be made to store, prepare, and deliver them.³²

But simply getting *information* on such weapons, let alone *supplies*, was proving impossible. Townley told McBride that attempts had been made to obtain information from the US Department of the Air Force via the RAAF Air Attaché in Washington on

²⁹ Ibid., 52–3.

³⁰ Alan Stephens, *Power Plus Attitude: Ideas, Strategy and Doctrine in the Royal Australian Air Force 1921–1991*, RAAF Air Power Studies Centre (Canberra: Australian Government Publishing Service, 1992), 147–8.

³¹ NAA: A5954, 1400/15, letter (Top Secret) from Athol Townley, Minister for Air and Minister for Civil Aviation, to Philip McBride, Minister for Defence, 12 September 1956. The Sabre, specifically, the Avon Sabre, was the Australian variant of the American F-86 Sabre: “CAC CA-27 Avon Sabre A94-989,” Australian National Aviation Museum, <http://www.aarg.com.au/cac-avon-sabre-a94-989.html> (accessed 9 June 2015).

³² NAA: A5954, 1400/15, letter from Townley to McBride, 12 September 1956.

the potential use of tactical nuclear weapons from Australia's Sabres. However, it was apparent that such information would not be shared in the absence of an Australia-US agreement on the exchange of atomic energy information.³³ But rather than seek an agreement for information on the weapons, Townley proposed that Australia pursue an agreement for the weapons themselves. In his letter of 12 September, he asked McBride to consider

the desirability of initiating action with a view to the Australian Government requesting the Government of the United States for an agreement to obtain tactical atomic weapons to be held in Australia for use in R.A.A.F. Canberra and Sabre aircraft in the event of war.³⁴

Clearly, Townley saw US nuclear weapons as an interim measure to Australia developing an indigenous nuclear weapons capability. He also saw them as weapons to be *used* in Australia's region. RAAF historian Alan Stephens wrote that Townley unequivocally stated his conviction that such weapons, if acquired and if necessary, would be used in the "north-west approaches" to Australia—in other words, Southeast Asia.³⁵ Furthermore, the fact that Townley and the RAAF were interested in acquiring tactical nuclear weapons for the Canberra and the Sabres demonstrated just how unaware they were of the size, weight and technical complexity of nuclear weapons.³⁶ Moreover, it showed that the Australians did not know how to use nuclear weapons and

³³ Ibid. Walsh stated that that year, the RAAF asked the United States Air Force (USAF) for information on the use of tactical nuclear weapons with the Avon Sabre aircraft, but the USAF declined to respond: Walsh, "Surprise Down Under," 16, n.54.

³⁴ NAA: A5954, 1400/15, letter from Townley to McBride, 12 September 1956.

³⁵ "Procurement of Nuclear Weapons, Use of by the Australian Forces, 12-9-65, CRS A7942/1, N78; 65/6/Air, Box 158, CRS AA1969/100, AA," quoted in Alan Stephens, *Going Solo: The Royal Australian Air Force, 1946–1971* (Canberra, Australian Government Publishing Service, 1995), 365.

³⁶ The Canberra would have struggled to carry just one 'tactical' weapon; in 1958, the only one in the Royal Air Force (RAF) inventory weighed 1,590 kilograms and measured four metres in length, which prohibited delivery by the Sabre. Furthermore, with a nominal yield of 15–20 kilotons, the bomb was in the same category as those dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, and thus could hardly be considered 'tactical': Lax, *From Controversy to Cutting Edge*, 11; and Stephens, *Going Solo*, 367.

were dependent on the Americans for assistance.³⁷ Consequently, Australian strategic planners were denied access to information on the nation's ability to deliver and utilise nuclear weapons.

McBride submitted Townley's proposal to the Defence Committee for its views on joint Service elements of a possible approach to the US.³⁸ McBride and Secretary of the Department of Defence, Frederick Shedden, had agreed that no further action should be taken until the Defence Committee's reports on policy were in hand.³⁹ Townley's proposal, which was initially referred to the Joint Planning Committee,⁴⁰ gained momentum with the Defence Committee.⁴¹ When Frederick Osborne took over the portfolio from Townley one month later, he built-on his predecessor's initiative.⁴² Osborne and the Defence Committee "began a campaign to hold US tactical nuclear weapons in Australia for delivery by RAAF Canberra and Sabre aircraft in the event of war."⁴³ The intention "to hold" nuclear weapons was seemingly a viable alternative to

³⁷ Cawte, *Atomic Australia*, 107. From 1957, Scherger changed the RAAF College syllabus so that there was a greater emphasis on physics to ensure the service's future leadership were intellectually prepared to command a nuclear air force: Stephens, *Going Solo*, 366.

³⁸ NAA: A5954, 1400/15, "Procurement of Nuclear Weapons from U.S.A.," letter (Top Secret) from [Frederick Shedden], Secretary, [Department of Defence], to [G.E. Blakers], Secretary, Defence Committee, 4 October 1956.

³⁹ NAA: A5954, 1400/15, letter (Top Secret) from McBride to Townley with note in footer from [Frederick Shedden], 12 September 1956.

⁴⁰ NAA: A5954, 1400/15, Defence Committee Agendum No.173/1956 (Top Secret), "Procurement of Nuclear Weapons from U.S.A.," 5 October 1956. The principal officers of the Joint Planning Committee were the deputy chiefs of the armed services. The Committee's role was "to report on matters of Joint Service interest referred to it by the Defence Committee and the Chiefs of Staff Committee": Karl Metcalf, "Near Neighbours: Records on Australia's Relations with Indonesia: Joint Planning Committee" (Research Guides), NAA, <http://guides.naa.gov.au/near-neighbours/chapter4/joint-planning-committee.aspx> (accessed 21 October 2015).

⁴¹ Lax, *From Controversy to Cutting Edge*, 11.

⁴² On 24 October 1956, Osborne became Minister for Air, and Townley, Minister for Immigration: Edwards, *Crises and Commitments*, 439; and Scott Bennett, "Townley, Athol Gordon (1905–1963)," Australian Dictionary of Biography, National Centre of Biography, Australian National University (ANU), <http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/townley-athol-gordon-11876> (published in hardcopy 2002; accessed online 21 October 2015).

⁴³ Cawte, *Atomic Australia*, 107.

procurement; as Walsh stated, “Nuclear weapons proponents in Australia knew that the Americans had no intention of selling nuclear weapons.”⁴⁴ The Defence Committee concluded that US legislation would inhibit US President from 1953–61, Dwight D. Eisenhower, from transferring nuclear weapons to Australia. The Defence Committee stated in “The Strategic Basis of Australian Defence Policy,” which it endorsed on 11 October 1956:

Unlike her major allies (the United States and the United Kingdom), Australia does not have any nuclear weapons. In view of her limited resources, the costs involved in their production in Australia would make this completely prohibitive. Present legislative provisions prevent the United States from making supplies of such weapons available to Australia. It is doubtful if the United Kingdom has sufficient stocks of her own at present to make any available.⁴⁵

The prospects of, and conditions for, Australian access to US nuclear weapons were clarified in mid-December 1956. At a meeting of NATO, the US Secretary of Defence, Charles Wilson, publicly announced the willingness of the US to supply modern

⁴⁴ Walsh, “Surprise Down Under,” 2. In his article, Walsh defined procurement as “gaining access to nuclear weapons via a third party,” and stated that from 1956–63, three initiatives pertained to the procurement of nuclear weapons by elements in the Government: “1) discussions regarding the purchase of tactical nuclear weapons; 2) the acquisition of a nuclear capable delivery system; and 3) a proposal for nuclear weapons on-demand”: *ibid.* In his PhD dissertation, he offered a fourth: “a Department of Supply initiative for nuclear weapons cooperation”: Walsh, “Bombs Unbuilt,” 50. Walsh distinguished procurement from indigenous development, and also, nuclear sharing arrangements under NATO, which employ a dual key system, because “Australia’s intent was to acquire weapons that would be under purely national control.” Walsh, “Surprise Down Under,” 2. In other words, Walsh made a distinction between procuring and holding/hosting weapons. My use of the term ‘acquiring’ in this thesis however, includes procuring and hosting. Also, references to hosting in this thesis relate to both tactical and strategic nuclear weapons.

⁴⁵ Defence Committee, “Strategic Basis of Australian Defence Policy,” October 1956, in Frühling, *A History of Australian Strategic Policy Since 1945*, 208. The “Strategic Basis of Australian Defence Policy,” otherwise known as the Strategic Basis papers, were the most important Defence strategic guidance documents in Australia. The purpose of the papers was “to prioritise possible and actual threats to Australia’s vital interests, and to develop the outlines of ‘a plan’... from which principles could be derived to guide the development and use of Australia’s armed forces.” They were drafted at regular intervals (typically every three years) by uniformed officers and civilian public servants, specifically, the Joint Planning Committee with input on international developments provided by the Joint Intelligence Committee. The papers were endorsed by the Defence Committee and thus represent their consensus view on the key aspects underlying defence policy. They were submitted to the government of the day for formal consideration, which led to Decisions by Cabinet. Therefore, the papers were “a key guidance mechanism at the interface between the government’s policy directive, and the Defence organisation’s professional advice.” They were often shared with Australia’s closest allies to inform them of the country’s policy until the late 1960s when they were classified ‘AUSTEO’ (Australian Eyes Only): Frühling, *A History of Australian Strategic Policy Since 1945*, 1–10.

weapons to Western allies that were “capable of firing atomic charges”; however, “the U.S. would retain possession of the atomic warheads.”⁴⁶ Five days later, McBride wrote to Casey for the likely reactions of the Americans and British to an Australian approach for nuclear weapons.⁴⁷ The Defence Minister, however, had been slow to follow-up on the proposal originally initiated by Townley, having not contacted Casey for months after receiving Townley’s correspondence. According to Stephens, with the US option closed, Casey told McBride that there were no political factors preventing an approach to the UK.⁴⁸ Thus, the approach to the UK for nuclear weapons was Australia’s second preference. Nevertheless, as the remainder of this discussion shows, Australian officials continued to maintain an interest in acquiring US nuclear weapons.

One justification for Australia’s effort to acquire nuclear weapons was related to SEATO. In his letter to Casey, McBride reminded him that contingency plans were in place for SEATO forces to use nuclear weapons in response to Chinese Communist or Viet Minh aggression that could not otherwise be controlled, and suggested that such plans justified any Australian attempt to acquire nuclear weapons.⁴⁹ It was also under SEATO that the Defence Committee was convinced that Australian forces in operations with British and American forces would be “supported by nuclear action” by the UK and US when required. Such support, they thought, might have included their allies having made “elements armed with and capable of using nuclear weapons” available to

⁴⁶ “U.S. Offers Weapons to NATO,” *Herald* (Melbourne), 15 December 1956, 12.

⁴⁷ Stephens, *Going Solo*, 365–6.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 366.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 365.

Australian forces or “by making such weapons available to our forces in the field under certain operational circumstances.”⁵⁰

If that was the case, and given the size of the American and British arsenals, why did Australia believe it needed a nuclear capability? The Defence Committee, which felt that the services would be considerably more effective if armed with low-yield kilo-ton (KT) (tactical) nuclear weapons, offered the following reason:

The availability of these weapons would be of considerable importance to the Australian Services should a situation develop which require defensive operations in the north-west approaches to Australia, particularly if the support of the US or UK with nuclear weapons was not available at short notice.⁵¹

But there were other less obvious reasons behind Australian interest in acquiring a nuclear capability. Australian military officials claimed that Australia had to be able to deploy and use the same weaponry as its allies if it were to be considered a full and respected member in collective defence arrangements such as ANZUS and SEATO, and thus avoid relegation to a secondary role with resulting diminished status and political influence.⁵² Accordingly, “any thinking about the role of nuclear weapons revolved around their tactical use in a war-fighting context, not their strategic utility as instruments of deterrence.”⁵³ Further, Australian officials viewed tactical nuclear

⁵⁰ Defence Committee, “Strategic Basis of Australian Defence Policy,” October 1956, in Frühling, *A History of Australian Strategic Policy Since 1945*, 208. Emphasis in original. See also Stephens, *Going Solo*, 365; and Cawte, *Atomic Australia*, 106–7.

⁵¹ “Defence Committee Report, 8 November 1956, A571 58/677,” quoted in Cawte, *Atomic Australia*, 107.

⁵² Walsh, “Surprise Down Under,” 2–3.

⁵³ Leah, *Australia and the Bomb*, 11, and also, 21–2.

weapons as sophisticated conventional weapons.⁵⁴ It was also accepted that tactical nuclear weapons would dramatically increase the firepower of military units, which would therefore reduce the manpower and costs associated with maintaining a specific level of firepower.⁵⁵ For the RAAF, whose manpower and equipment had already been reduced through economic austerity measures following World War II, nuclear weapons were seen as a counter to its small force size.⁵⁶ In essence, “In a world of limited nuclear wars, Australia did not want to find itself at a disadvantage.”⁵⁷

Subsequently, and in spite of the limitations it anticipated (as noted above), the Defence Committee deliberated approaching its great and powerful friends for tactical nuclear weapons. It considered propositioning the UK given the contribution Australia had made to the British nuclear weapons programme.⁵⁸ However, the Defence Committee favoured approaching the US in keeping with Australia’s general objective of making Australian and American equipment compatible. This became government policy the next year when Menzies stated in Parliament that Australia’s military equipment would

⁵⁴ Walsh, “Surprise Down Under,” 3.

⁵⁵ David N. Schwartz, *NATO’s Nuclear Dilemmas* (Washington D.C.: The Brookings Institution, 1983), 22.

⁵⁶ Lax, *From Controversy to Cutting Edge*, 11.

⁵⁷ Walsh, “Surprise Down Under,” 3.

⁵⁸ Cawte, *Atomic Australia*, 107. From 1952–57, Australia allowed the UK to conduct 12 atmospheric nuclear tests on its territory: Lorna Arnold and Mark Smith, *Britain, Australia and the Bomb: The Nuclear Tests and their Aftermath*, 2nd edn. (Basingstoke, UK: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006), xi. (This is a revised and updated version of Lorna Arnold’s *A Very Special Relationship: British Atomic Weapon Trials in Australia* (London: Her Majesty’s Stationery Office, 1987), and now includes material on, for example, the effect that tests at the Maralinga proving ground had on the environment and participants). For more on British nuclear tests on Australian territory, see for example: Peter Morton, *Fire across the Desert: Woomera and the Anglo-Australian Joint Project 1946–1980* (Canberra: Australian Government Publishing Service Press, 1989); and J. L. Symonds, *A History of British Atomic Tests in Australia* (Canberra: Australian Government Publishing Service, 1985). Once British nuclear testing began in earnest, Head of the Department of Nuclear Physics at ANU and key adviser to Australian governments on US atomic tests at Bikini Atoll, Ernest Titterton, believed that Australia would eventually be given access to information on the construction of atomic weapons: Reynolds, *Australia’s Bid for the Atomic Bomb*, 125.

be standardised with that of the US for cooperation in Southeast Asia. Menzies was saddened by the Government's decision to deviate from the UK but he emphasised it was in the national interest:

It may be thought by many honorable [*sic*] members, as it was thought by me when the proposals first came forward, that it is unfortunate that we should adopt a reequipment [*sic*] plan which appears to produce some divergence from the United Kingdom. But it seems to us clear that, having regard to Anzus and Seato [*sic*] and to our geographical situation, Australian participation in any future war must be in close association with the forces of the United States of America.⁵⁹

Air Marshal Frederick Scherger, then Chief of the Air Staff, on the other hand, was more matter-of-fact about the decision: "Our nearest source of supply is America, which is our one probable ally in the area, so it would be foolish of us to attempt to standardise with anybody else's equipment."⁶⁰ Historian David Lee stated that in making this decision, "the Menzies government formalised its commitment to the strategy of 'forward defence'"—of conducting military operations with the US in Asia and away from Australia's shores.⁶¹

The Australian Government's decision on the compatibility of equipment followed the announcement by the UK that it would reduce its conventional forces.⁶² The British Government's decision was one of a series of significant and necessary changes made to

⁵⁹ Menzies, CPD, House, 4 April 1957, http://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/genpdf/hansard80/hansard80/1957-04-04/0113/hansard_frag.pdf;fileType=application%2Fpdf (accessed 16 September 2015), 5.

⁶⁰ Rayner, *Scherger*, 168.

⁶¹ Lee, *Australia and the World in the Twentieth Century*, 104.

⁶² David Lowe, *Australian Between Empires: The Life of Percy Spender* (London: Pickering & Chatto, 2010), 143–4.

curtail its defence programmes and spending in order to steady the British economy and adapt to the new strategic environment. By the end of August 1955, its gold and dollar reserves were falling by \$100 million a month. As British PM from 1955–57, Anthony Eden, put it, “The country was plainly attempting to do too much with the limited resources at its disposal.”⁶³ It was attempting to build much needed infrastructure and at the same time withstand the heavy burdens of National Service and defence, the latter being the largest item of government expenditure.⁶⁴ It was the only US ally building its own nuclear weapons, including thermonuclear weapons, and delivery systems,⁶⁵ yet these could not completely replace conventional forces in Europe or the Middle East, which were still insufficiently mobile. The British economy “had somehow to meet these various demands, at a time when every new weapon cost twice as much as its predecessor.”⁶⁶ It had garrison commitments to NATO that it was fulfilling in Germany, a considerable number of overseas territories to guard, and it had security alliances to sustain, such as SEATO. Further, it had to be prepared for limited war and able to adapt its forces for global war should one eventuate. Yet the British economy was not expected to be able to sustain the mounting strain from increased defence expenditure, which was estimated to rise from £1,527 million in 1955 to £1,929 million in 1959.⁶⁷ A subsequent re-examination of British long term needs resulted in the reappraisal of NATO strategy and the doctrine of reliance on nuclear deterrence, and generated an opportunity to reduce the strength of the British armed forces. In a telegram to

⁶³ Anthony Eden, *The Memoirs of the Rt. Hon. Sir Anthony Eden K.G., P.C., M.C.: Full Circle* (London: Cassell & Company Ltd, 1960), 313.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 313–5.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 370.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, 363.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, 370.

Eisenhower, Eden stated that while the British Government recognised the importance of having some American and British forces on the ground in Europe under NATO command, they were initially deployed to meet the threat of a Soviet land invasion. In the immediate post-war period, the Soviet Union and the countries of Eastern Europe enjoyed the advantage of having conventional forces far superior to the Western powers. The advent of nuclear weapons, on which the NATO powers now relied to both deter and repel aggression, meant that conventional forces were no longer the principal form of military protection.⁶⁸

In contrast, Australia had neither sufficient conventional forces nor nuclear weapons to deal with threats to its security. That the UK was no longer willing or able to manage the distribution of power in the Asia-Pacific added to the perception that Australia should have nuclear weapons to ensure its defence.⁶⁹ The decision to begin withdrawing British military forces east of the Suez Canal meant that the Australian Government was confronted with the long-term possibility of strategic isolation. Also, despite Prime Minister John Curtin's statement in 1941 that Australia looked to the US and the establishment of the ANZUS Treaty a decade later, Australian policymakers up to the late 1950s, as illustrated by Menzies' comments above, had wanted to maintain a strong

⁶⁸ Ibid., 369 and 372–3.

⁶⁹ Leah, *Australia and the Bomb*, 13.

level of defence cooperation with the UK. In the 1960s, Australian governments had a concurrent focus on Empire Defence and American interests and strategy.⁷⁰

In July 1957, Australia managed to secure a Defence Agreement under the amended US *Atomic Energy Act*.⁷¹ This included a promise from the US to give Australia atomic information for the purposes of mutual defence, which was aimed at developing defence plans and training personnel in the use of, and defence against, nuclear weapons. This secret military information, which was channelled through the Australian Joint Services Staff in Washington, was conditional on strict security requirements. A visit to Australia by a US Military Information Control Committee, which was concerned with procedures to secure such information and handling requirements,⁷² reflected American concern over the adequacy of Australian security measures to safeguard such information. This is further emphasised by the fact that final security and classification arrangements were not approved by the relevant US authorities until August 1960. According to historian Wayne Reynolds, it is clear from the scant archival record that while the US shared information on atomic target analysis and battlefield operations, Australia had “extremely limited” access to top secret atomic information.⁷³ It was in

⁷⁰ Ibid., 5, 12–3 and 28. For more on the concept of Empire Defence, Australia and nuclear weapons, see Reynolds, *Australia's Bid for the Atomic Bomb*, passim. In the immediate post-war period, Australia's foreign policy outlook was also heavily influenced by its participation in the sterling area. (To manage better the fluctuations in the pound sterling, the sterling Commonwealth and non-Commonwealth states established an “area” resulting in their currencies having a fixed value against one another despite floating against non-sterling states): David Lee, *Search for Security: The Political Economy of Australia's Postwar Foreign and Defence Policy* (Canberra: Allen & Unwin in association with the Department of International Relations, ANU, 1995), 6. For a contemporary assessment of the effects on Australia of the British withdrawal, see T.B. Millar, ed., “Britain's Withdrawal from Asia: Its Implications for Australia,” (proceedings of a seminar conducted by the Strategic and Defence Studies Centre, ANU, Canberra, 29–30 September 1967).

⁷¹ Cawte, *Atomic Australia*, 108.

⁷² Reynolds, *Australia's Bid for the Atomic Bomb*, 206 and 209–10.

⁷³ Ibid., 209–10.

this period, Leah argued, that Australia began to look at ANZUS as a *nuclear* alliance. Only then did the notion of extended nuclear deterrence (END) start to emerge: “that the United States *should* deter aggression with nuclear weapons on Australia’s behalf.”⁷⁴ However, the nuclear option and relying on END were not considered by policymakers to be an exact binary choice; the latter did not become *policy* until the 1970s when Australia eventually took a position on nuclear non-proliferation.⁷⁵ The Agreement, in Cawte’s view, “did not, however, spell out, any more than did ANZUS, an American obligation to use nuclear weapons on Australia’s behalf.”⁷⁶ In other words, this Agreement lacked substance and the Government did not make further gains in terms of obtaining a nuclear commitment from the US for Australia’s defence. As political scientist Michael Mandelbaum noted, the only true nuclear alliances in the post-war period were between the US and Japan, embodied in the bilateral Security Treaty of 1950, and NATO, which bound together the US and the states of Western and Southern Europe; other US security arrangements, such as SEATO, proved much flimsier.⁷⁷

In 1957, a US Technical Mission visited Australia to evaluate the latter’s capacity to manufacture US equipment. It noted the interest of the RAAF in nuclear weapons, and the USAF agreed to examine the nuclear capability of Australian aircraft—the Avon, Sabre and Canberra models—together with the Office of the Australian Air Attaché,

⁷⁴ Leah, *Australia and the Bomb*, 11 (emphasis in original), and also 17, 29 and 126. Leah stated that this is demonstrated by the absence of records on statements about ANZUS and nuclear weapons prior to 1957: *ibid.*, 13.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, 57 and 122–3.

⁷⁶ Cawte, *Atomic Australia*, 108.

⁷⁷ Mandelbaum, *The Nuclear Revolution*, 148. Mandelbaum does not consider the Warsaw Pact—the military organisation of the Soviet Union and the communist-governed states of Eastern Europe—a *nuclear alliance* as “it is not truly an alliance in the sense of a voluntary association”: *ibid.*, 149.

which was in contrast to its position a year earlier when it declined to respond to the RAAF-initiated inquiry. According to Cawte, nothing seems to have come of this study, other than

a vague promise that if US policy should seek to develop a nuclear capability among allied nations, the Australians would be first-priority recipients ‘to enhance [their] combat potential’—which they should bear in mind when choosing replacement aircraft.⁷⁸

While the Menzies Government already sought nuclear-capable delivery systems before this “vague promise,”⁷⁹ it likely influenced its decision in 1963 to purchase the American reconnaissance bomber aircraft, the Tactical Fighter Experimental (TFX) (later known as the F-111), which is referred to later in this section.

It was not just Osborne and the RAAF that believed Australia should be encouraging the US to give it access to nuclear weapons. One proponent was Percy Spender, Australia’s longest serving Ambassador to the US from 1951–58.⁸⁰ Spender, who “envisaged a very atomic Australia,” had been involved in successful negotiations for the sale of Australian uranium to the US throughout 1955–56, and for the sharing of information

⁷⁸ Cawte, *Atomic Australia*, 108. Cawte did not provide the date of the visit in the text or citation. However, a search for the archival record on the NAA catalogue using her citation reveals the year in the record title: NAA (Adelaide): D174, SA5280/2, “Visit of USA Technical Mission 1957.” Reynolds also referred to a visit to Australia in this period of a US mission with the same objective as stated by Cawte, but his discussion of it related to conventional forces. It is likely that both Cawte and Reynolds referred to the same visit. The difficulty in triangulating this information, which has been used differently by the authors, is compounded by the fact that Cawte cited an Australian archival record; Reynolds, a US archival record; and neither of them specified the date of the visit: Reynolds, *Australia’s Bid for the Atomic Bomb*, 204.

⁷⁹ For example, a search for a replacement aircraft for the Canberra bomber in 1954, which was commissioned by the Government and led by Air Vice-Marshal A.M. Murdoch, included a requirement that the aircraft “had to be able to fly with the maximum possible bomb load from Singapore to Bangkok or from Darwin to Singapore with, if necessary, nuclear weapons”: Stephens, *Power Plus Attitude*, 150.

⁸⁰ David Lowe, *Percy Spender and the American Century*. The Trevor Reese Memorial Lecture, Carl Bridge, series ed. (London: Menzies Centre for Australian Studies, King’s College London, 2002), 2–3; and Lowe, *Australian Between Empires*, 143.

on peaceful uses of atomic energy.⁸¹ According to Reynolds, he had been “chipping away” at US officials to supply nuclear weapons to Australia since the Petrov Affair (April 1954).⁸² In a despatch dated 24 December 1957, Spender pressed that Australia could not afford “to sit back and wait” for a special arrangement with the US.⁸³ It reflected what his biographer David Lowe described as his “characteristic impatience, aggressive manner and preparedness to know what was best for Australia [which] made for an audacious style of diplomacy that sometimes left others gasping.”⁸⁴ Spender wrote:

We should lose no opportunity of impressing upon the United States government the importance of making interdependence a reality among ANZUS powers. We should, I consider, raise our target in regard to what help we might ask from the United States, particularly in the field of tactical atomic weapons.⁸⁵

An architect of the ANZUS Treaty, in his own words, Spender viewed this as a way of ““putting flesh on the bones of ANZUS’.”⁸⁶

Spender sent his cablegram at the end of what had been a troublesome year for Australian strategic and defence planners. In addition to the British decision to withdraw troops from Australia’s region, the Soviet Union launched the world’s first

⁸¹ Lowe, *Australian Between Empires*, 149. For Spender’s thoughts on the control of atomic weapons and the consequences of nuclear war, see 127.

⁸² Reynolds, *Australia’s Bid for the Atomic Bomb*, 205.

⁸³ “Despatch No.5/57 from Spender, 24 December 1957, TS852/10/4/2, A1838/269, [NAA],” quoted in *ibid.*

⁸⁴ Lowe, *Australian Between Empires*, 123.

⁸⁵ “Despatch No.5/57 from Spender, 24 December 1957, TS852/10/4/2, A1838/269, [NAA],” quoted in Reynolds, *Australia’s Bid for the Atomic Bomb*, 205–6. Reynolds also included a shortened quotation earlier at 186.

⁸⁶ “Spender’s letter to Casey, 25 June 1952, Spender Papers, box 1, fol. 3, MS4875, NLA,” quoted in Lowe, *Australian Between Empires*, 146. See also David Lowe, “Spender, Sir Percy Claude (1897–1985),” *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, National Centre of Biography, ANU, <http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/spender-sir-percy-claude-15475> (published in hardcopy 2012; accessed online 25 January 2015).

ICBM, R-7(8K71), and the first earth-orbiting satellite, Sputnik 1, that triggered the space race. Significantly, the ICBM development demonstrated that the US mainland was no longer immune to a Soviet nuclear attack. This coincided with the period, as noted above, when Australian policymakers had begun to concentrate on American interests and strategy, and appreciate the notion of extended nuclear deterrence. These developments “made Washington’s perceived commitment to the defense [*sic*] of its allies much less credible” as Australian policymakers believed the US would be much more reluctant to threaten the use of nuclear weapons in Southeast Asia now that American cities were vulnerable to nuclear attack.⁸⁷ A major dilemma facing US planners during this period was “how to reassure the allies over the American strategic guarantee without at the same time encouraging nuclear proliferation.”⁸⁸ For as the well-known British Labour politician, and later Secretary of State for Defence (1964–70) and Chancellor of the Exchequer (1974–79), Denis Healey, stated: “America’s allies are unlikely to accept the new policy of limited atomic war unless they have the appropriate atomic weapons in their own possession and under their own control.”⁸⁹ The US response was to place greater emphasis on designing nuclear strategy for continental defence and deterring conflict in Europe,⁹⁰ which was also a setback for Australia.

In some respects, cooperation with the US in the nuclear field continued to look challenging for Australia by 1958. In April, US Secretary of State, John Foster Dulles,

⁸⁷ Leah, *Australia and the Bomb*, 6, and also 24 and 33. For discussion on the effect of Sputnik on NATO members, see Schwartz, *NATO’s Nuclear Dilemmas*, 61.

⁸⁸ Schwartz, *NATO’s Nuclear Dilemmas*, 80.

⁸⁹ “Denis Healey, ‘The Sputnik and Western Defense,’ [*sic*] Address at Chatham House, December 17, *International Affairs* 44, no. 2 (1957): 148–149” quoted in Leah, *Australia and the Bomb*, 33–4.

⁹⁰ Leah, *Australia and the Bomb*, 18.

delivered a statement to the US Joint Committee on Atomic Energy, which resulted in a discussion on the possibility of additional states acquiring a nuclear capability. Dulles, in response to a question, was plain-spoken about Australia's potential to do so. According to an Australian Associated Press journalist, who attended the hearing and provided a report on it to the Australian Embassy in Washington, Dulles stated that the US was most unlikely to extend nuclear weapons technology to Australia. Dulles was also reported to have said that Australia was closer to possessing the "necessary technical knowledge" to develop weapons. However, Dulles noted that this was very different from actually making and testing them, and for that, "I do not think they have the financial resources," Dulles stated. The Secretary of State also made it clear that only states that already had achieved a nuclear weapons capability would be given nuclear information, which effectively restricted information to the UK.⁹¹

Despite the limitations imposed by the *McMahon Act* and US policy, atomic information sharing between the US and Australia began to improve. This is perhaps attributable to the Soviet launch of an ICBM and *Sputnik*, which, by providing the UK with the opportunity to persuade the US to pool resources in order to meet the Soviet technological threat, had paved the way for the restoration of American-British nuclear information sharing.⁹² Australia received its first batch of information under the new Defence Agreement when Australians officials were invited to observe the Eniwetok

⁹¹ NAA: A1209, 1957/4067, inward cablegram (I.6158), Australian Embassy, Washington, to Department of External Affairs, 18 April 1958.

⁹² On the influence of the Soviet ICBM and *Sputnik* on American-British nuclear information sharing, see Harold Macmillan, *The Macmillan Diaries: Prime Minister and After, 1957–66*, Peter Catterall, ed. (London: Macmillan, 2011), xxxi and 64.

“Hardtack” tests.⁹³ Additionally, access to US nuclear weapons looked more promising for Australia. Later that year, Scherger held discussions with his American counterpart, Chief of Air Staff, General Thomas White, who informed him that the US had a variety of tactical bombs ranging from five to 50 kilotons, and that a one kiloton weapon would soon be tested.⁹⁴ White privately told Scherger that he would be “quite happy to see a cross-section of such bombs stored in Australia under American control and available for use by us [Australia] with American agreement.” White however, had no authority to make Scherger an offer.⁹⁵ According to Stephens, “as White’s position was strictly personal and contrary to official United States policy it carried no authority.”⁹⁶ Nevertheless, a US nuclear weapons store was apparently discussed at the ANZUS meeting in March 1959. Reynolds noted that although the Australian archival record is

⁹³ Reynolds, *Australia’s Bid for the Atomic Bomb*, 206. Twenty-two tests were conducted at Eniwetok Atoll (now spelt Enewetak Atoll) in the Pacific as part of Operation Hardtack I between May and August 1958. The first 11 tests were carried out as Operation Newsreel. Of the 22 tests, 19 were conducted for weapons related purposes, two to evaluate weapons effects on targets, and one was a safety experiment. The US conducted a total of 77 nuclear tests that year, making 1958 the busiest to date. It concluded with Eisenhower entering into a unilateral testing moratorium on 31 October with the understanding that the Soviet Union also would refrain from testing. In September 1961, the Soviet Union resumed testing and the US followed suit: “United States Nuclear Tests: July 1945 through September 1992,” United States Department of Energy, Nevada Operations Office, Las Vegas, Nevada, December 2000, http://www.nv.doe.gov/library/publications/historical/DOENV_209_REV15.pdf (accessed 8 August 2015), vii, xi, 10–3, and 158–9.

⁹⁴ Stephens, *Going Solo*, 367.

⁹⁵ “NAA: A7942, N78 Part 1, Scherger, note to File, 16 October 1958; and NAA: A1945 6/5/10, 13 November 1958,” quoted in Lax, *From Controversy to Cutting Edge*, 12. See also Reynolds, *Australia’s Bid for the Atomic Bomb*, 206.

⁹⁶ Stephens, *Going Solo*, 367.

classified, the US record reveals that such a store was contemplated as part of the general distribution of the US nuclear arsenal.⁹⁷

Around this time, the Eisenhower Administration also indicated it was open to ‘nuclear sharing’ and had started stationing tactical nuclear weapons throughout Europe under NATO.⁹⁸ Some US officials had considered installing nuclear weapons in Australia. In 1958, Regional Planning Adviser in the Bureau of Far Eastern Affairs from 1956–60, Marshall Green,⁹⁹ proposed stationing American ICBMs on Australian territory.¹⁰⁰ However, Leah who documented this proposal did not discuss it further. Nonetheless, this limited information illustrates that nuclear sharing arrangements under Eisenhower,

⁹⁷ Reynolds, *Australia's Bid for the Atomic Bomb*, 206. At the NATO heads of government meeting in December 1957, it was decided that a nuclear stockpile for NATO was to be established in case NATO forces needed access to nuclear weapons in a conflict with Warsaw Pact forces. Under this arrangement, the North Atlantic Council would authorise the release of NATO's stockpiled warheads that would be matched to delivery systems already deployed to allies. The concept was developed in response to calls from France, over which it received allied support, for the US to supply NATO members with nuclear weapons (France had announced at a ministerial meeting of the Council a year earlier that it was pursuing its own nuclear arsenal). This would require the US to revise the *McMahon Act*, which restricted the provision of nuclear weapons technology and information to other countries. The stockpile concept, however, apparently avoided the need for revision because the warheads would remain in complete US ownership, custody, and control. The concept was also seen as a major step towards the European request and a way of planning for the deployment and use of weapons that US forces were already stockpiling in Europe: Schwartz, *NATO's Nuclear Dilemmas*, 67 and 75–6. Perhaps the prospect of a stockpile of US nuclear weapons in Australia influenced the Government's subsequent decisions regarding the procurement of nuclear-capable delivery systems, specifically, missiles and aircraft, discussed later in this section.

⁹⁸ Walsh, “Surprise Down Under,” 2. According to Julian Schofield, “Nuclear sharing is the deliberate or permissive transfer between a donor and a recipient state of resources that facilitate a military nuclear capability, with the intention of affecting a change in the strategic environment of the international system, or for the purpose of bartering for vital resources”: *Strategic Nuclear Sharing*, Global Issues Series (Basingstoke, UK: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014), 2. For an excellent account of NATO nuclear sharing and negotiations from 1957–60 for missile deployments in Europe (the UK, Italy, and Turkey each agreed to station missiles on their territory, which required revisions to the *McMahon Act*), see Schwartz, *NATO's Nuclear Dilemmas*, ch.4. On NATO nuclear sharing in the 1950s and 1960s, see also: Schofield, *Strategic Nuclear Sharing*, ch.9; and Andreas Wenger, *Living with Peril: Eisenhower, Kennedy, and Nuclear Weapons* (Lanham, Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 1997), ch.4, and more generally, Parts II and III.

⁹⁹ From 1963–65, Green was Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for the Far East, and from 1969–73, Assistant Secretary of State for East Asia and the Pacific. He was US Ambassador to Australia from 1973–75: Marshall Green interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy, 13 December 1988 (initial interview date), transcript, Foreign Affairs Oral History Collection, Association for Diplomatic Studies and Training, Arlington, Virginia, <http://adst.org/wpcontent/uploads/2012/09/Green-Marshall.pdf> (accessed 22 July 2015), 26 and 118. For an excellent account of Green's contribution to the US foreign service, see Kent G. Sieg, “Marshall Green (1916–)” in *Notable U.S. Ambassadors since 1775: A Biographical Dictionary*, e-book edn., Cathal J. Nolan, ed. (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1997), 117–123.

¹⁰⁰ Leah, *Australia and the Bomb*, 25–6 and 154, n.79.

which are associated with NATO and Europe, were originally considered to have a broader geographical application, and that the notion of a nuclear capability for Australia was not always generated by the Australian Government. While it is beyond the scope of this thesis, Green's proposal, and the reactions of the American and Australian governments to it, are highly worthy of further research, particularly in light of Barwick and Tange's subsequent discussion during the Cuban Crisis about Australia potentially hosting US nuclear weapons on its territory in the future.

Official documents in support of an Australian nuclear capability often referred to NATO developments, and therefore "the actions of NATO countries appear to have had a profound impact on nuclear thinking in Australia."¹⁰¹ This interest in, and belief that it should be part of, the general Western deterrent system continued into the subsequent period.¹⁰² For Australian officials, nuclear sharing appeared to confirm that nuclear weapons would become an integral part of modern warfare and that "any self-respecting advanced, industrialized country would have its own atomic arsenal." They also believed that nuclear weapons would spread and have a greater role in the force structures of the US and the UK. As the Defence Committee noted in 1958, modern weapons systems had become so complex and expensive that unless nuclear warheads were integrated for maximum effectiveness, they could not be justified.¹⁰³

¹⁰¹ Walsh, "Surprise Down Under," 2.

¹⁰² Leah, *Australia and the Bomb*, 44. Evidence of Australia's interest in nuclear sharing and bases for ICBMs in Europe from 1961–64, she noted, can be found in NAA: A1945, 186/4/29, "United States Proposals for Nuclear Detection Installations in Australia – Project High Noon," 1961–1964: *ibid.*, 158, n52.

¹⁰³ Walsh, "Surprise Down Under," 2.

The influence of NATO developments on the Australian Government was demonstrated in September 1958 when, according to Reynolds, Menzies suggested to the US that Australia be given a “key to the cupboard.”¹⁰⁴ This would enable Australia to draw on the US nuclear weapons stockpile as the situation required.¹⁰⁵ Reynolds concluded that under this arrangement, the US would supply Australia with tactical nuclear weapons if there was conflict in the Pacific.¹⁰⁶ However, it seems that the Australian Government was also influenced in this regard by the UK. Walsh stated that British Prime Minister, Harold Macmillan, told Menzies at the beginning of that year (29 January 1958) that the US did want any more nuclear powers, and that the UK eventually intended to depend on American nuclear weapons via a “key to the cupboard” arrangement.¹⁰⁷ This was a clear signal to Australia of the dominance of the US in the nuclear field and, more generally, the diminishing role and status of the UK. Although acquiring nuclear weapons from the US or UK appeared unlikely, the Chiefs of Staff of the armed services nonetheless maintained the view in 1959 that “Australia should seek to acquire nuclear weapons, either under our own control or by some arrangement whereby we could be assured that nuclear weapons would be available for our defense [*sic*].”¹⁰⁸ The US continued to provide Australia with some atomic information. Between November 1959 and December 1960, it received information on the feasibility of arming RAAF Canberra aircraft with USAF Mark 7 atomic bombs, copies of US aircrew manuals for

¹⁰⁴ Reynolds, *Australia's Bid for the Atomic Bomb*, 206.

¹⁰⁵ Here I draw on Walsh's definition of this type of arrangement: “Surprise Down Under,” 16, n.28.

¹⁰⁶ Reynolds, *Australia's Bid for the Atomic Bomb*, 206.

¹⁰⁷ Walsh, “Surprise Down Under,” 4. Walsh did not discuss this approach to the US and Reynolds did not elaborate. While it is beyond the scope of this thesis, this is another instance in Australia's nuclear history that is highly worthy of further research.

¹⁰⁸ “Memo from H.D. Anderson, Defense [*sic*] Liaison Branch to Mr. Heydon, External Affairs, July 8, 1959, ‘Australian Development of Nuclear Weapons and Australian Access to Information on Nuclear Weapons,’ NAA: A1838/269, TS680-10-1,” quoted in Leah, *Australia and the Bomb*, 48.

weapons delivery, and instructions for maintaining "special stores" (a euphemism for nuclear weapons).¹⁰⁹

By 1960, Australia was in the market for missiles to secure its northern defences.¹¹⁰ British Defence Minister Duncan Sandys' April 1957 White Paper, widely considered the key document relating to a debate over air defence systems, stated the likely dominance of missiles and the associated demise of manned aircraft. According to Stephens, time has shown that Sandys' claims were overstated. However, at the time, Sandys' Paper was convincing and contributed to confusion over force structure, including within Australia's RAAF, which "shifted its priority from aircraft to missiles then back to aircraft."¹¹¹ When the RAAF reviewed the structure of the air defence system in 1959,

the Air Staff stated that the basis of a modern air defence system was the surface-to-air guided weapon [(SAGW)], *augmented* by manned fighters and that ultimately a number of SAGW squadrons would be needed for the air defence of Australia.¹¹²

Missiles would be prioritised over manned aircraft for air defence until the mid-1960s.¹¹³

¹⁰⁹ Reynolds, *Australia's Bid for the Atomic Bomb*, 206. Reynolds erroneously referred in the text to the United States Army Air Force (USAAF) instead of the USAF, which has been inserted here. The USAAF was abolished in 1947 and the USAF was its immediate successor: "Guide to Federal Records: Records of the Army Air Forces [AAF]," National Archives and Records Administration (NARA), <http://www.archives.gov/research/guide-fed-records/groups/018.html> (accessed 10 June 2015).

¹¹⁰ Walsh, "Bombs Unbuilt," 65.

¹¹¹ Stephens, *Power Plus Attitude*, 143.

¹¹² *Ibid.*, 144. Emphasis in original.

¹¹³ *Ibid.*

The American Nike and the British Bloodhound were the two missile options that had been narrowed down and were under consideration by the Departments of Air and Defence in 1960. According to Walsh, British records reveal that the Australians favoured Nike because it was nuclear-capable and more affordable, but following British reassurances that Bloodhound would include a nuclear-capable missile (Mark III) and, unlike Nike, would be upgraded over time, they were eventually persuaded and opted for Bloodhound. But before the year was out, the British Treasury terminated Mark III, despite vehement and unsuccessful protests from Defence officials that Australia bought into Bloodhound precisely because it included a nuclear missile.¹¹⁴

In November 1962 the Bloodhound Mark I—the non-nuclear version—entered into Australian service with the RAAF.¹¹⁵ But by 1964, it was already obsolescent and, “being limited to one role, represented poor security cost-effectiveness” compared to the flexibility that aircraft could provide. Consequently, the Air Force reversed its policy.¹¹⁶ Nevertheless, in what seems more of a coincidence than a deliberate measure, the Menzies Government had shored-up its northern defences with SAGWs in the immediate aftermath of the Cuban Crisis.

Although this example centres on Australian-British cooperation over missile procurement, it is relevant to Barwick and Tange’s discussion during the Cuban Crisis

¹¹⁴ Walsh, “Bombs Unbuilt,” 65.

¹¹⁵ It entered RAAF service with No. 30 Squadron: Stephens, *Power Plus Attitude*, 161, n.172.

¹¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 144.

for five reasons. First, Barwick and Tange's discussion about the potential effects of *US offensive weapons and bases* on Australian soil, which was prompted by the installation of Soviet missiles and bases in Cuba with which they draw direct comparisons, indicates that this phrase encompassed US nuclear warheads and missiles. Prior to 1959, air defence policy prioritised aircraft over missiles, as shown in this preceding discussion, and thus nuclear weapons acquisition—and much of the historiography on it for that matter—has focused on the delivery of atomic bombs by aircraft. Barwick and Tange's discussion therefore reflects the air defence policy of the period. Second, while there are clear differences between procuring nuclear-capable missiles and contemplating hosting nuclear missiles, it demonstrates that Australia had previously considered possessing nuclear-capable missiles. Third, it specifies Australian interest in *American* nuclear-capable missiles. Fourth, it provides for the possibility that Barwick and Tange contemplated hosting US nuclear weapons because Australia was still locked into Bloodhound but without a nuclear-capable missile, which was apparently the reason it pursued procuring the defence materiel in the first place. Fifth, the installation of missiles on Australia's northern shores is noteworthy in terms of how it relates to the potential affect US nuclear weapons on Australian soil could have on Indonesia, which is discussed later in this section.

Stephens wrote that from 1960 there was a change in Western attitudes towards the use of nuclear weapons in Southeast Asia. Exploiting advanced technology and weaponry had earlier seemed the only response to overwhelming Communist manpower, particularly in China as noted later in this chapter, now there were other considerations.

Analysts believed that the Soviet Union had likely agreed to provide China with tactical nuclear weapons in certain circumstances, which might have influenced the West in terms of a first nuclear strike. Also, supposedly well-trained and well-equipped local troops in Southeast Asian countries courtesy of American military aid programmes were thought to have to some extent offset the manpower advantage held by the Communists, and thus the West's need to resort to nuclear weapons. Consequently, Australia's Washington Embassy advised Canberra that with regards to the effect this had on the military balance, "there had undoubtedly been a shift in American thinking towards placing greater emphasis on conventional forces and capabilities, and that considerable doubt now existed over the use of tactical nuclear weapons."¹¹⁷ Nevertheless, Australian interest in acquiring nuclear weapons persisted.

In September 1961, Australia came very close to asking the US for nuclear weapons. This was prompted by negotiations on a Nuclear Test Ban Treaty (NTBT) between the nuclear weapons states: the US, the UK, and the Soviet Union. Earlier in the NTBT negotiations, the Soviet Union had demanded that it cover listening posts in Australia in light of it having hosted British nuclear tests. With the talks stalled, the UK asked Australia if it could offer listening posts to the Soviets in an attempt to restart the negotiations.¹¹⁸ The Australian Government believed that a NTBT could limit its options for a nuclear capability.¹¹⁹ On 13 June 1961, Menzies submitted to Cabinet that

¹¹⁷ Stephens, *Going Solo*, 367–8.

¹¹⁸ Walsh, "Surprise Down Under," 8–9.

¹¹⁹ There are strong parallels here with the concerns of subsequent coalition governments about the potential effect of the NPT on Australia's nuclear ambitions. See: Walsh, "Unbuilt Bombs," 78–8; Wilson, "Conflicting Interests," passim, especially 111 regarding the Government's secret relief over the collapse of early treaty negotiations between the superpowers in 1964–65; and Hubbard, "From Ambivalence to Influence," passim.

Australia should seek from the UK an agreement for nuclear weapons on-demand in exchange for joining the NTBT. The PM proposed that Australia:

secure now from the United Kingdom recognition of an obligation to allow Australia the right of access to United Kingdom nuclear weapon 'know how' (or preferably ... the right to draw on the U.K. nuclear weapons stockpile) in the event of important countries in the general Pacific and India [*sic*] Ocean areas acquiring nuclear capability.¹²⁰

Here, Menzies' preference for procurement over indigenous development likely reflected his predilection for the status quo of keeping nuclear weapons in the hands of great powers (discussed later in this section) and defence on the cheap given procurement was the more cost effective option.¹²¹ With the backing of Cabinet, Menzies replied to Macmillan that the UK "either supply 'full manufacturing data for the production of operational weapons' or 'a more practical arrangement... for the supply of ready-made weapons'."¹²² Macmillan replied that, due to British-American agreements, he could not meet Australia's request without first consulting the US, but offered to do so on Australia's behalf. Following Macmillan's response on 14 August 1961, Cabinet proceeded with its strategy to send the US the same request. But it stopped delivery of the letter to Secretary of State Rusk, which was due to arrive in the first week of September, when the Soviet Union resumed atmospheric testing on 1 September 1961. Although the superpowers continued to partake in NTBT negotiations, an agreement appeared unlikely. Consequently, listening posts and the threat to

¹²⁰ "[NAA:] A5818/2; Robert Menzies to the Cabinet, Nuclear Tests Conference: Control Posts in Australia, Submission No. 1156, V6, p.13 (Secret)," quoted in Walsh, "Surprise Down Under," 8.

¹²¹ On the estimated high financial cost of developing a nuclear weapon, see Lax, *From Controversy to Cutting Edge*, 12.

¹²² "[NAA:] A1838/269, TS852/10/4/2/3; Letter from Prime Minister Menzies to Prime Minister Macmillan, June 29, 1961, p.2 (Secret)," quoted in Walsh, "Surprise Down Under," 8.

Australia's nuclear ambitions had been avoided.¹²³ In his reply to Macmillan on 6 September 1961, Menzies recognised the limitations posed by the British-American agreements and suggested that he defer lobbying the Americans until "circumstances are more propitious."¹²⁴

The US continued to share information on nuclear weapons with Australia in 1962. The USAF sent Australia the staff officers' field manual on the use of nuclear weapons, and the Australian Army received information that enabled it to plan war games involving tactical nuclear weapons.¹²⁵ And of course, in October, Barwick and Tange contemplated the effect the Cuban Crisis could have on Australia if in the future it hosted US nuclear weapons on its territory.

Walsh stated that from September 1961 to October 1964, "it appears that the Australian government took no additional steps to acquire access to nuclear weapons or weapons information."¹²⁶ Reynolds has since demonstrated that Australia acquired access to some nuclear weapons information in 1962. In terms of nuclear weapons acquisition, this hiatus occurred in what Walsh described as "the *attempted procurement* phase" from 1956–63, which preceded "the *indigenous capability* phase" from late 1964–72;¹²⁷ Australian officials seriously contemplated an indigenous nuclear capability in the wake

¹²³ Walsh, "Surprise Down Under," 8–9.

¹²⁴ "PRO: DO 164/17; Inward Telegram to Commonwealth Relations Office from Canberra, No. 808, September 6, 1961 (Top Secret)," quoted in Walsh, "Surprise Down Under," 9.

¹²⁵ Reynolds, *Australia's Bid for the Atomic Bomb*, 207.

¹²⁶ Walsh, "Bombs Unbuilt," 72.

¹²⁷ Walsh, "Surprise Down Under," 1, emphasis in original, and *passim*.

of the Chinese nuclear test and the first substantive steps by the British to withdraw their forces from Asia.¹²⁸ Oddly, Walsh's attempted procurement phase covers a period for which he claimed that the Government made no effort to acquire nuclear weapons. More significant, however, is that Walsh's conclusion and the dearth of scholarship on Australia's nuclear history for the period 1961–64, has left readers to infer that the Australian Government had lost interest in acquiring nuclear weapons at that time, that is, following its approach to the British during the NTBT negotiations. Luke Auton drew that conclusion. In his doctoral dissertation completed just over a decade later, he stated:

This illustrates that although it had concerns about limitations being placed on its options, the Australian government was not at this stage *interested in the possession* of nuclear weapons—an otherwise concerted effort towards such a goal would not have stopped at that point.¹²⁹

Auton confused the Government's pause in its attempts to acquire allied nuclear weapons after the NTBT negotiations collapsed with disinterest in their possession. However, Tange's minute suggests otherwise. The discussion on it in this thesis is therefore highly significant to Australia's nuclear historiography for two reasons. This section of the thesis has shown that elements within Australian governments demonstrated an interest in acquiring US nuclear weapons for Australia from 1954–61. Thus, Barwick and Tange's discussion during the Cuban Crisis of Australia potentially hosting US nuclear weapons on its territory demonstrates that an interest in US nuclear weapons continued into 1962. After all, had there been no interest in acquiring a nuclear

¹²⁸ Walsh, "Bombs Unbuilt," 73 and 300.

¹²⁹ Luke Thomas Auton, "'A Sort of Middle of the Road Policy': Forward Defence, Alliance Politics and the Australian Nuclear Weapons Option, 1953–1973" (PhD diss., University of New South Wales, Australian Defence Force Academy, 2008), 265. Emphasis added. I am grateful to Lachlan Clohesy for sharing with me this dissertation.

capability for Australia, then the issue of foreign bases would not have been considered by Australian officials in determining the Government's policy on the crisis. Also, the fact that this interest continued means that the Government's decision in 1963 to purchase the F-111,¹³⁰ now appears less incongruous in the chronology of Australia's nuclear history, which as has been noted, is focused overwhelmingly on Australia's attempts to acquire British nuclear weapons. That is, until now there has been a disconnect in the published literature between the unsuccessful approach to the UK and subsequent cancelled approach to the US for nuclear weapons in 1961—which is separated by an inferred lack of interest in acquiring nuclear weapons during the hiatus from 1961–63—and the decision to purchase an American nuclear-capable aircraft in 1963.¹³¹ Tange's minute overcomes this disconnect by providing evidence of a continuing interest in US nuclear weapons throughout this period.

¹³⁰ Menzies announced the decision in Parliament on 24 October 1963: CPD, House, 24 October 1963, http://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/genpdf/hansard80/hansardr80/1963-10-24/0140/hansard_frag.pdf;fileType=application%2Fpdf (accessed 26 July 2015). For more on the Government's decision to purchase the aircraft, see Hanno Weisbrod, "Australia's Decision to Buy the F-111," *The Australian Quarterly* 41, no. 2 (1969): 7–27. For detailed accounts of the F-111 in Australian service, see: Lax, *From Controversy to Cutting Edge*; and Stewart Wilson, *The Lincoln, Canberra & F-111, In Australian Service*, Australian Air Power Collection, vol. 3 (Weston Creek, ACT: Aerospace Publications, 1989), 127–84.

¹³¹ In the 1963 search for a Canberra replacement, another nuclear-capable aircraft, the British TSR2, was considered. In a meeting of Australian and British Defence Ministers in July 1961, the Australian representative was reported to have stated that "if Australia were to buy the T.S.R.II, it wanted 'to be sure that nuclear weapons would be available' as well": "[NAUK:] DO 35/8287; Memo from N. Pritchard, [Acting Deputy Under-Secretary of State, CRO], to the Secretary of State for Commonwealth Relations, July 20, 1961, pp.1–2," quoted in Walsh, "Bombs Unbuilt," 64. It is unknown whether Townley negotiated access to US nuclear weapons as part of Australia's decision to purchase the F-111, but this is worthy of further research. Certainly, the nuclear-capability of the American aircraft was not lost on key Australian officials: see the diaries of Minister for Air (1964–68), Peter Howson, *The Howson Diaries: The Life of Politics*, Don Aitkin, ed. (Ringwood, Victoria: Viking Press, 1984), 386; and Ambassador to the US (1958–64), Howard Beale, *This Inch of Time*, 170. While Beale, unlike Howson, was not explicit about the nuclear capability of the F-111, this conclusion can be elicited from his discussion of what would constitute a suitable replacement aircraft, particularly given his openness to nuclear weapons at that time: *ibid.*, 87.

Tange's minute is further evidence of Australian officials having an interest in *hosting* nuclear weapons.¹³² As noted earlier, Cawte and Leah only briefly mentioned two other examples, and scholars have ignored the concept of hosting altogether. Instead, Australia's nuclear ambitions have been framed as a dichotomy: procure weapons from allies, particularly the UK, or build an indigenous arsenal. The two phases defined by Walsh (noted above) are a clear example of this dichotomy, and have been adopted by other scholars. However, Barwick and Tange's discussion on the possibility of hosting nuclear weapons, and Cawte and Leah's examples, sit outside this framework. This thesis proposes that the way in which scholars have framed Australian nuclear history, including Australian nuclear identity, therefore needs to be reconsidered to include the concept of hosting nuclear weapons.¹³³

In his doctoral research, Walsh discovered that individuals and their ability to form coalitions significantly influences nuclear decision-making, in terms of both nuclear proliferation and nuclear restraint.¹³⁴ Whether others within the Government had an interest in hosting US nuclear weapons in 1962, and whether this led to any decision-

¹³² This is a form of nuclear sharing within Schofield's definition; see n.98.

¹³³ The study on Australian nuclear identity is Leah and Lyon, "Three visions of the bomb." Leah and Lyon claimed that three visions—essentially, ideals and frameworks about nuclear weapons—characterise Australian nuclear identity: the "Menzian," "Gortonian," and "disarmer" visions, the first two being named after PMs they believed best outlined the central tenets of the position. In addition to inherent problems with their framework (such as the inaccuracy that arises from labelling these visions after PMs, especially the Menzian vision; the absence of scholarship on the formation of identity; their reliance on public policy statements to the exclusion of archival records and the related historiography on Australian nuclear ambitions; and their use of evidence out of its historical context), the concept of hosting does not fit within it. At best, and despite these other issues, it would sit between the first and second visions, so described, of nuclear weapons remaining in the hands of great powers and Australia's need for its own nuclear capability. While the authors referred to a statement made in 1995 by Australian Prime Minister from 1991–96, Paul Keating, as an example of "a relatively rare and somewhat uncomfortable attempt to straddle two of the visions," hosting is another example that illustrates that this straddling of visions is not indeed rare, and instead, indicates that there are inherent problems with their framework: *ibid.*, 471. I am grateful to Lyndon Burford, with whom I discussed this article at length, for his input on Australian nuclear identity in relation to the concept of hosting.

¹³⁴ Walsh, "Bombs Unbuilt," *passim*.

making outcomes, requires further investigation beyond the scope of this thesis. But the fact that it was Barwick and Tange who considered the potential effect of the crisis on Australia's nuclear ambitions, that is, the two most senior officials of the Department of External Affairs, is nonetheless highly significant. It is also worth recalling here another External Affairs official, Spender, and his advocacy for a nuclear weapons capability for Australia. Yet Walsh wrote that Australia's nuclear decision-making story can generally be understood as "a contest between two powerful coalitions: the military and the civilian atomic energy agency pushing the nuclear weapons option and the combined forces of the Department of External Affairs and Treasury *opposing* it."¹³⁵ Also, in his study on Australia and the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), Christopher Hubbard detailed how External Affairs led the push for the Treaty's signature against vehement opposition from 'the bomb lobby', describing the Department as "anti-nuclear."¹³⁶ While there is no doubt that several individuals in the military, particularly the Air Force, and the Australian Atomic Energy Commission (AAEC) were the strongest advocates for a nuclear weapons capability, and that other individuals within External Affairs later provided leadership on the NPT, these claims are not representative of the Department, or at the very least, the positions put forth by some of its most senior officials up to that point. In his book on Australia's nuclear ambitions, former Australian diplomat Richard Broinowski wrote that "The battle lines

¹³⁵ Walsh, "Surprise Down Under," 14. Emphasis added.

¹³⁶ Hubbard, "From Ambivalence to Influence," 529, 535 and 541. Australian nuclear weapons proponents that made-up the 'bomb lobby' included right-wing parliamentarians, mainly those in the coalition and the Democratic Labor Party; nuclear physicists at the Australian Atomic Energy Commission (AAEC), especially Baxter; military leaders, for example, Scherger and Rear Admiral G. J. B. Crabb; and elements within the Departments of Defence, National Development, and Supply, as well as Prime Minister and Cabinet under Prime Minister John Gorton: *ibid.*, 540–1; and Broinowski, *Fact or Fission?*, 52–3.

were not drawn so much *between* ministers or departments, as *amongst* them.”¹³⁷

Sweeping statements about External Affairs and Australian post-war nuclear ambitions are therefore inaccurate and misleading.

In order to help further contextualise this discussion on the significance of Tange’s minute to Australia’s nuclear history, it is also worth noting some broader observations about the historiography, specifically: the dearth of scholarship on the period 1961–63; the lack of integration of this literature with studies on Australian foreign and defence policy and military history; and its general complexity. In terms of the gaps in the historiography, Reynolds acknowledged in *Australia’s Bid for the Atomic Bomb* the challenges that come with researching subjects involving nuclear weapons given the limitations placed on the archival record:

Research has obviously been a significant problem on an issue such as this. Working on defence and foreign affairs files on issues such as atomic weapons has more in common with archaeology than with contemporary history. Much has been classified and only scattered fragments are available to the public researcher. I have not been able to see many key files ... All that is left is to discern a pattern from the fragments left in various archives and personal papers.¹³⁸

¹³⁷ Broinowski, *Fact or Fission?*, 48. Emphasis in original. Broinowski’s account concentrates on the role of the Department of External Affairs (later the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT)) and those who served it in shaping Australia’s nuclear policies and activities. Although he did not set out to provide an ‘insider’s perspective’, Broinowski had a long career with External Affairs having joined the Department in 1963. He held a variety of positions during his postings to Tokyo (1965), Rangoon (1970–1), Tehran (1972–3), and Manila (1975–77). From 1979–82, he was the Executive Director of the Japan Secretariat in Canberra. Broinowski was Ambassador to the Socialist Republic of Vietnam (1983–85), the Republic of Korea (1987–89), and Mexico, with concurrent accreditation to the Central American Republics and Cuba (from 1994). He was also General Manager of Radio Australia from 1990–91. Since retiring from DFAT in 1997, Broinowski has held academic appointments: “Richard Broinowski: President of AIIA NSW,” Australian Institute of International Affairs, <http://www.internationalaffairs.org.au/about-us/our-people/richard-broinowski/> (accessed 8 October 2015). Leah also acknowledged that many within External Affairs lobbied ardently for an Australian nuclear capability: *Australia and the Bomb*, 48.

¹³⁸ Reynolds, *Australia’s Bid for the Atomic Bomb*, vii.

This is evidenced by the sparse and scattered nature of the declassified material available on Australian interest in US nuclear weapons. Significant gaps in Australia's nuclear historiography also indicate that there is much more to explore. Despite the centrality of nuclear weapons to the Cuban Crisis, scholars of Australia's nuclear history had not thought to examine the Government's reaction to, and policy on, the situation. It is likely that there are other issues with a nuclear dimension awaiting investigation.

Moreover, studies pertaining to the period in which Australian governments had nuclear ambitions—including those on Australian foreign and defence policy, military history, and the memoirs and biographies of Australian officials—have either overlooked or inadequately addressed nuclear issues (on both energy and weapons).¹³⁹ For example, the official histories of Australia's involvement in Southeast Asian conflicts from 1948–75, which deal with the political, social, diplomatic, and military aspects of Australia's commitments, do not discuss the nation's relationship with nuclear weapons or its nuclear ambitions. This is despite the emphasis in these official histories on the influence that the strategic environment and alliance dynamics had on the development and implementation of defence policy. These were also factors underlying Australian interest in either acquiring or developing a nuclear capability. This oversight is made all the more astonishing by the fact that the authors of these histories had unrestricted

¹³⁹ Broinowski made this point in 2003 regarding the scholarship relating to Australian foreign policy having stated that “An analysis of Australia's nuclear diplomacy is clearly overdue”: *Fact or Fission?*, 1. Also in 2003, Reynolds stated that a vast amount of Australian military history after World War II is concerned with what happened—and to whom—and what is lacking is an assessment of Australian strategic outlook. Australian scholars, he claimed, have not engaged with the broader issues that confronted the US or the UK in the post-war period, such as nuclear strategy and deterrence. Thus, Reynolds argued that what is needed is an integration of government planning on what was unknown with the operational aspects of the nation's military history: Wayne Reynolds, “On Writing About Australian Military History after the Second World War: The Need for Integration,” *Australian Historical Studies* 121 (2003): 169–71.

access to all relevant Australian government records and the availability of, at the very least, Cawte's landmark study to which none of them referred.¹⁴⁰ Consequently, Australia's relationship with the bomb, rather than being dealt with as another aspect of Australia's foreign and defence policy, has become a niche area of study that is under-represented in the broader and *official* Australian political narrative.

¹⁴⁰ Cawte's *Atomic Australia* was published in 1992. The first volume in that official histories series, Edwards' *Crises and Commitments*, was also published that year and therefore could not have engaged with her study. Edwards, who is also the general editor of the series, nonetheless had unrestricted access to relevant Australian government records. Despite this, Edwards made no mention of Australian governments' interest in a nuclear capability, even when he discussed the 1962 Strategic Basis paper outlined earlier: Edwards, *Crises and Commitments*, 247–8 and *passim*. In the subsequent official history, *To Long Tan*, which was published only a year after Cawte's study, McNeill mentioned in passing that training scenarios in the early 1950s, as well as annual exercises based on the Strategic Basis papers conducted by the Chief of the General Staff from 1957–60, envisaged the possible use of nuclear weapons. (Atomic weapons were not included in the 1964 exercise and McNeill did not stipulate if their possible use was contemplated in the 1961–63 exercises). However, McNeill's discussion of these exercises was to illustrate the emphasis on Southeast Asia in Australian strategic thinking, its effects on the Army, and that these exercises came remarkably close to predicting the circumstances in which combat forces were committed to Vietnam; he did not discuss Australian nuclear strategic thinking or ambitions: Ian McNeill, *To Long Tan: The Australian Army and the Vietnam War 1950–1966*. The Official History of Australia's Involvement in Southeast Asian Conflicts 1948–1975 (St Leonards, NSW: Allen & Unwin in association with the Australian War Memorial, 1993), 4, 10–13 and 14. The other official histories in that series that were published after Cawte's study, do not cite her work nor later examples in the historiography, nor make any reference whatsoever to Australian nuclear weapons ambitions: Brendan G. O'Keefe, *Medicine at War: Medical aspects of Australia's involvement in Southeast Asia 1950–1972*. Official History of Australia's Involvement in Southeast Asian Conflicts 1948–1975 (St Leonards, NSW: Allen & Unwin in association with the Australian War Memorial, 1994); Chris Coulthard-Clark, *The RAAF in Vietnam: Australian Air Involvement in the Vietnam War 1962–1975*. Official History of Australia's Involvement in Southeast Asian Conflicts 1948–1975 (St Leonards, NSW: Allen & Unwin in association with the Australian War Memorial, 1995); Peter Dennis and Jeffrey Grey, *Emergency and Confrontation: Australian Military Operations in Malaya and Borneo 1950–1966*. Official History of Australia's Involvement in Southeast Asian Conflicts 1948–1975 (St Leonards, NSW: Allen & Unwin in association with the Australian War Memorial, 1996); P.G. Edwards, *A Nation at War: Australian Politics, Society and Diplomacy during the Vietnam War 1965–1975*. Official History of Australia's Involvement in Southeast Asian Conflicts 1948–1975 (St Leonards, NSW: Allen & Unwin in association with the Australian War Memorial, 1997); Jeffrey Grey, *Up Top: The Royal Australian Navy and Southeast Asian Conflicts 1955–1972*. Official History of Australia's Involvement in Southeast Asian Conflicts 1948–1975 (St Leonards, NSW: Allen & Unwin in association with the Australian War Memorial, 1998); Ian McNeill and Ashley Ekins, *On the Offensive: The Australian Army in the Vietnam War 1967–1968*. Official History of Australia's Involvement in Southeast Asian Conflicts 1948–1975 (Crows Nest, NSW: Allen & Unwin in association with the Australian War Memorial, 2003); Ashley Ekins with Ian McNeill, *Fighting to the Finish: The Australian Army and the Vietnam War, 1968–1975* (Crows Nest, NSW: Allen & Unwin, 2012). Given the emphasis in these texts on Australia's strategic environment and defence capabilities in the post-war period, that the official histories do not even acknowledge Australian governments' nuclear weapons ambitions is remarkable. Furthermore, Edwards' 2014 study on Australia and the Vietnam conflict, which is based on this official histories series and is therefore broader than the title suggests, also does not engage with the extensive historiography on Australia's nuclear weapons ambitions available to it (cited at n.11); Edwards simply made a single, passing reference to Gorton's interest in an Australian nuclear capability: Peter Edwards, *Australia and the Vietnam War* (Sydney: NewSouth Publishing, 2014), 193.

Additionally, as Leah rightly articulated, “Australia’s relationship with nuclear weapons is complex, ambiguous, distant, and multilayered.”¹⁴¹ Her observation may partly explain the stark differences in views in the historiography, which reflect the various disciplinary approaches and diverging theoretical perspectives of scholars. This has, as Luke Auton aptly stated and demonstrated, “complicated our understanding of the most fundamental of issues.”¹⁴² Consequently, the scholarship is challenging with which to engage, and integrate with other research, but it is not impossible. Auton acknowledged that these diverse opinions and new perspectives in the historiography have nonetheless resulted in “a more balanced representation of the salient facts.”¹⁴³ This, he concluded, is the most important development thus far; “because Australia is so routinely referenced as both a potential proliferant and model of nuclear restraint, the more comprehensive the historiographical basis for discerning its previous nuclear intent, the better.”¹⁴⁴ However, it is clear that there is still much to be clarified and discovered about Australia’s Cold War nuclear ambitions, particularly in terms of their effect on the Australian-American alliance in the early 1960s.

Tange and Barwick’s consideration of Australia hypothetically hosting American nuclear weapons aligns with the Defence Committee’s appreciation in 1962 of a nuclear capability for Australia. Significantly, Tange, in his capacity as Secretary of External

¹⁴¹ Leah, *Australia and the Bomb*, viii.

¹⁴² Auton, “Opaque Proliferation,” 567.

¹⁴³ Ibid. Auton’s views are a strong example of the diverse opinions and new perspectives in the historiography with which he is at odds. Auton, who focused on nuclear weapons acquisition (procurement), argued that Australia simply wanted to give the *impression* that it wanted such weapons to achieve policy objectives, specifically, to maintain an allied presence in its region and induce its allies to increase its defence efforts there. He claimed it was never interested in possessing nuclear weapons. This is contrary to the consensus position that Australia sought a nuclear weapon capability and for military purposes: Auton, “‘A Sort of Middle of the Road Policy’,” abstract (unnumbered), 4, 262–3, and *passim*.

¹⁴⁴ Auton, “Opaque Proliferation,” 567.

Affairs, was a member of that Committee. His civilian company included: E.W. Hicks, Secretary of Defence, who also chaired the Committee; Bunting as Secretary of the Prime Minister's Department; and C.L.S. Hewitt, then Acting Secretary of the Department of Treasury. The services were represented by: Chairman of the Chiefs of Staff Committee, Air Marshal Scherger;¹⁴⁵ Chief of the Naval Staff, Vice Admiral Henry Burrell; Chief of the General Staff, Lieutenant-General Reginald Pollard; and Chief of the Air Staff, Air Marshal Hancock.¹⁴⁶ In January 1962, the Defence Committee endorsed an updated "Strategic Basis of Australian Defence Policy" paper. It had not formally reviewed Australia's strategic environment and capability options since 1958, having endorsed its last policy paper in January 1959.¹⁴⁷ In the 1962 paper, the Defence Committee made the following statement regarding Australia and nuclear weapons:

The acquisition of a nuclear capability by Australian forces would vastly increase our defensive and offensive strength and would also enhance the value of our contribution in operations under collective arrangements. Moreover, in the future some weapon systems will be dependent on nuclear warheads for their effectiveness.¹⁴⁸

The Defence Committee then clarified that in light of the security provided by Australia's treaty arrangements, notably ANZUS (discussed later in this chapter), in

¹⁴⁵ By virtue of this position, Scherger was Australia's chief military representative to meetings on ANZUS, SEATO and ANZAM. He was also Deputy Chairman of the Defence Committee. In March 1965 while still in this role, Scherger was promoted to the rank of Air Chief Marshal. He was the first member of the RAAF and the first Duntroon graduate to receive this promotion: Rayner, *Scherger*, 144, 148, 149 and 170.

¹⁴⁶ NAA: A4311, 698/2, Minute by the Defence Committee at meeting on 25 January 1962, 26 January 1962. The Secretaries of the Prime Minister's Department, and the Departments of External Affairs and Treasury, became members of the Defence Committee from 1957: Menzies, CPD, House, 4 April 1957, http://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/genpdf/hansard80/hansardr80/1957-04-04/0113/hansard_frag.pdf;fileType=application%2Fpdf (accessed 20 July 2015), 6.

¹⁴⁷ Frühling, *A History of Australian Strategic Policy Since 1945*, ix.

¹⁴⁸ NAA: A4311, 698/2, "Strategic Basis of Australian Defence Policy," endorsed by Defence Committee, 25 January 1962, 21, para. 67.

which the US is nuclear-armed, there was “no *immediate* requirement for an *independent* Australian nuclear capability.” Also, the Defence Committee determined that while Australia’s priorities with its limited resources lay in “improving the strength and effectiveness of our forces in the conventional field,” Australian forces insofar as possible should have “a potential capability to operate with nuclear weapons and in the face of nuclear opposition.”¹⁴⁹

In light of the deteriorating strategic environment since the previous review and Australia’s limited defence capacity, the Defence Committee determined that a US presence in the region was imperative for Australia’s security and that of the region. However, it was concerned that Australia may have trouble persuading the US to maintain its regional military presence and assist it if necessary. Reflecting on SEATO and ANZUS, the Defence Committee stated in the memorandum accompanying the policy paper:

Unless Australia can support these treaty arrangements with force contributions commensurate with her vital interest in preventing a communist victory in South East Asia, and commensurate with her resources, it will become more difficult to encourage the United States to retain an effective military presence in South East Asia and to assist in our security in time of need.¹⁵⁰

The need to maintain US forces in Australia’s region was of particular concern to Tange, who for some time had been disturbed by the inadequacy of Australia’s defence

¹⁴⁹ Ibid., para. 68. Emphasis added.

¹⁵⁰ NAA: A4311, 698/2, memorandum by Defence Committee accompanying “Strategic Basis of Australian Defence Policy,” endorsed by Defence Committee, 25 January 1962, 3, para. 4.

capabilities. In 1955, and thus early in his tenure as Secretary of the Department of External Affairs, Tange reported:

it is imperative to have stationed in, or available for, South East Asia adequate conventional forces which would...deter potential aggression by making it clear in advance that no swift victory could be achieved before atomic weapons were brought into use [...] I would be the first to recognize that one can only open up rather gingerly with the Americans the proposition that somebody should provide more conventional forces for service in the Asian area.¹⁵¹

It was therefore considered important not simply to maintain but to increase the American presence in the region. However, as Tange intimated, increased conventional forces would be a difficult matter to broach with the US, which was concentrating on continental Europe. The UK, on the other hand, was moving towards a reduction in its defence programmes, and subsequently, its forces “east of Suez”. By the early 1960s “Both Washington and London were sending increasingly sharp signals that they wanted to see Australia pay more of the price for its own defence.”¹⁵² According to Australian Ambassador to the US, Beale, who reflected on that period in his memoir, “The United States had for some time been urging Australia to make a greater defence effort in her own interests.”¹⁵³ At the ANZUS Council meeting in Canberra in May 1962, Rusk stated that the US wanted more support from its allies in Vietnam and asked Barwick to contribute instructors. Commander-in-Chief Pacific, Admiral Harry D. Felt, who was likewise in Canberra, also submitted proposals for an Australian contribution to Vietnam to the service chiefs. On 24 May 1962, Townley announced that Australia

¹⁵¹ “Report from Arthur Tange, the Australian Embassy in Washington, DC, to the Department of External Affairs, ‘The Role of Conventional and Nuclear Forces,’ June 10, 1955. In ‘UK-U.S. Defense Policy (NATO General Statement of Policy,’ NAA: A4968, CS 25/16/18,” quoted in Leah, *Australia and the Bomb*, 16.

¹⁵² Edwards, *A Nation at War*, 23.

¹⁵³ Beale, *This Inch of Time*, 173.

would commit up to 30 military instructors to Vietnam at the invitation of the South Vietnamese Government. The team of 29 personnel landed in Saigon on 3 August 1962 where they joined their leader Colonel F.P. (Ted) Serong, who had arrived on 31 July 1962; the date marked Australia's entry into the conflict. The commitment was a political gesture urged by the Department of External Affairs, which saw an opportunity to show Australia's willingness to stand by the US in Vietnam in case Australia ever needed American defence support. It also served Australia's strategy of "forward defence".¹⁵⁴ As Townley stated, "if the Communists were to achieve their aims in Viet Nam [*sic*] this would gravely affect the security of the whole South East Asian area and ultimately of Australia itself."¹⁵⁵ In other words, if Vietnam had a strong, militarily effective Communist government, the rest of the "dominoes" in Southeast Asia were expected to fall quickly. Thus, as per Bell's summary of the dominant assessment found in official documents, "the Australian national interest *required and necessitated* American combat intervention in Vietnam, since only that would prevent a rapid Communist victory there."¹⁵⁶

However, Tange was not only interested in increasing Australia's conventional capacity in this earlier period. For example, he endorsed the proposal to procure tactical nuclear weapons from the British. Like other officials, he doubted that the UK would share its atomic assets, but he agreed to proceed with the approach "if only to get a firm

¹⁵⁴ Ian McNeill, *To Long Tan*, 37–8 and 42.

¹⁵⁵ "Press Statement by the Minister for Defence, Mr Townley, on 24th May, 1962," in *Current Notes*, vol. 33, no. 5, May 1962, 36–7.

¹⁵⁶ Bell, *Australia's Alliance Options*, 33. Emphasis in original.

statement, in place of our present conjectures.”¹⁵⁷ Walsh noted that these doubts were likely encouraged by the “non-committal stance” of British Prime Minister Macmillan in his meetings with Menzies.¹⁵⁸ The lack of British commitment and their need to check with the US before pursuing arrangements with Australia probably encouraged the latter to approach the US directly for nuclear weapons. That said, the British were keen to help the Australians but careful not to upset the Americans.¹⁵⁹

Tange’s openness to US nuclear weapons may have been attributed to the fact that he “was realistic about the divisibility of the nuclear alliance.” If Australia was threatened with a massive conventional or nuclear attack, he did not believe Washington, with its nuclear weapons, would be willing to threaten to retaliate.¹⁶⁰ The dispute over West New Guinea, for example, had demonstrated to the Australians that the US would not automatically take its side on issues involving Indonesia. Thus, hosting US nuclear weapons was perhaps considered one way of securing the US presence in the region and the perceived benefits of possessing a nuclear deterrent and capability.

A further issue noted by the Defence Committee in its “Strategic Basis of Australian Defence Policy” of January 1962 was the uncertainty surrounding Indonesia’s political alignment. Indonesia had received substantial military assistance from the Soviet Union,

¹⁵⁷ “[NAA:] A7942/1 BN78-1, Memo from Arthur Tange, Secretary of the Department of External Affairs to the Acting Secretary, Department of Defence, Procurement of Nuclear Weapons for Australian Forces, January 22, 1958, p.2,” quoted in Walsh, “Bombs Unbuilt,” 58.

¹⁵⁸ Walsh, “Bombs Unbuilt,” 58.

¹⁵⁹ Ibid., 56–8.

¹⁶⁰ Leah, *Australia and the Bomb*, 42. This was also the view of Scherger: *ibid.*

and it was felt that this would strengthen the position of Indonesia's Communist party, which was the world's third largest after those of the Soviet Union and China.¹⁶¹ According to Leah, officials feared as early as 1956 that Indonesia might agree to station Soviet nuclear missiles on its territory.¹⁶² While the Indonesian Army's anti-Communist stance and US economic aid and advice offset Communist influence to some extent, Indonesia was expected to continue to shift towards "an essentially authoritarian socialist society" with communists and non-communists participating in government. The Defence Committee concluded that "Unless the anti-communist influence of the army can prevail Indonesian neutrality is likely, therefore, to continue on balance to favour communist interests as opposed to those of the West." Indonesia's future political alignment was therefore "of vital importance to Australia's security." Indonesia could be a direct threat to Australia's security, or under particular forms of government, "a useful barrier to communist expansion southwards." The Defence Committee recognised that "The rapidly increasing military strength of Indonesia is of great potential strategic significance to Australia" given its "formidable inventory of modern land, air and naval weapons, mainly from communist sources." Although it was felt that it would be some time before Indonesia could use its new weapons effectively, and an immediate and overt military response in attempt to resolve the West New Guinea dispute was not anticipated, the Defence Committee realised that Indonesia's increasing military capacity would "undoubtedly give her greater confidence in pursuing her claim [to the territory] by more aggressive means." The Defence Committee thought it probable that Indonesia would instead increase armed

¹⁶¹ NAA: A4311, 698/2, "Strategic Basis of Australian Defence Policy," endorsed by Defence Committee, 25 January 1962, 7, para. 21.

¹⁶² Leah, *Australia and the Bomb*, 13. Leah added, "This was noted in a report entitled 'Atomic Energy (Civil Defense) [sic],' May 30, 1956, NAA: A1838/276, CS 720/10/8": *ibid* 149, n.11.

infiltrations, attempts to promote political and physical resistance to the Dutch within the territory, and diplomatic pressure on the West, all of which would “increase the risk of incidents which could lead to hostilities.” The Defence Committee concluded that regardless of Communism’s growth in Indonesia, there was increasing potential for friction between Australia and Indonesia regarding the latter’s claim to territorial waters and related air space, which “would prejudice [Australia’s] right of passage through the area.” The Defence Committee felt that this potential for friction would remain despite any “favourable changes in political control” and may worsen with disputes over West and East New Guinea and the Borneo territories.¹⁶³

At the time there was a good deal of concern within Australia about Indonesia’s activities and ultimate objectives. There seemed to be multifarious threats to regional stability, and Australian defence strategy and planning should be read with that in mind. Clearly, Indonesia posed challenges for Australian security, and so too did the Cuban Crisis. Combined, the two matters could be highly problematic. In the copy of the minute filed, which is likely Dunn’s as his name is underlined, the following sections were highlighted: the Soviets have long objected to foreign bases with an offensive capacity; the US may need to emphasise Soviet deception and secrecy regarding the weapons and bases in Cuba; and Australia’s vulnerability to a Soviet blockade should American nuclear weapons be located on its soil in the future and targeted on the Soviet Union cannot affect its policy on the crisis.¹⁶⁴ Importance was therefore placed on

¹⁶³ NAA: A4311, 698/2, “Strategic Basis of Australian Defence Policy,” endorsed by Defence Committee, 25 January 1962, 7–8, paras. 21–5.

¹⁶⁴ NAA: A1838, 262/12/8/1 part 1, minute, Tange to Harry, Forsyth, Dunn and Robertson, 23 October 1962.

foreign bases and their implications. Concern over the recent build-up of Soviet military materiel in Indonesia and the Communist influence (both Soviet and local) there likely would have been exacerbated by Soviet activities in Cuba. Barwick and Tange were alive to the fact that the installation of American nuclear weapons in Australia could provoke a response from the Soviet Union commensurate with the US policy towards Cuba. Presumably, this would involve Indonesia. But there was also the possibility, which was likely on Barwick and Tange's minds, that Indonesia could become another Cuba. The installation of nuclear weapons in either country would increase dramatically the potential for friction, if not hostilities, between the two nations. Furthermore, a quarantine would exacerbate existing tensions over territorial boundaries and air space.

According to Edwards, Tange had urged the Defence Committee since late 1962 to improve Australia's capacity "to give military backing to its diplomacy," especially regarding Indonesia. Tange did so because "He could not accept the apparent willingness of Hicks and the service chiefs to rely on American support under the ANZUS and SEATO treaties."¹⁶⁵ However, as shown earlier, these were long-held views of Tange. In light of this, the dramatic changes to the strategic environment prior to 1962, and the pressure being exerted by its major allies, it is likely that Tange began pressing these points about Australia's defence capacity on the Defence Committee much earlier than Edwards stated. Rather, it seems that it was not until the divergence of views between the US and Australia over West New Guinea, which demonstrated that the Americans were not guaranteed to side with the Australians on matters affecting

¹⁶⁵ Edwards, *Arthur Tange*, 137.

their region and security, that Tange's cogent views were heeded. The eventual inclusion of Tange's concerns in the Defence Committee's Strategic Basis paper and accompanying memorandum for 1962 is indicative of recent events, but also of Tange's influence.

There is a clear parallel between Tange's minute of his discussion with Barwick during the Cuban Crisis and the Defence Committee's statements regarding Australia's need for a nuclear capability. The Defence Committee advised that Australia had a need for a nuclear capability, but not an independent one: the acquisition of nuclear weapons from one of its allies addressed this recommendation, and hosting US nuclear weapons on Australian soil was one scenario that was contemplated by Barwick and Tange. In light of Tange's involvement in the Defence Committee and his personal views on Australia's defence capabilities, he probably believed that the realisation of this scenario would have secured the US presence in the region and enhanced Australia's defence capacity, and thus security.

Tange's minute of his discussion with Barwick was consistent with the Government's reply to a UN inquiry on nuclear weapons conducted early in 1962. The Government's reply provides a clear statement of Australia's policy on nuclear weapons and reveals the hypocrisy in its policy on the Cuban Crisis with which Soviet delegates to the UN, as shown below, would later take issue. On 4 December 1961, the UN General

Assembly adopted resolution 1664 (XVI) on the question of disarmament.¹⁶⁶ In April 1962 in accordance with the resolution, Acting Secretary-General of the UN, U Thant, reported to the UN Disarmament Commission on his inquiry to member states

as to the conditions under which countries not possessing nuclear weapons might be willing to enter into specific undertakings to refrain from manufacturing or otherwise acquiring such weapons and to refuse to receive in the future nuclear weapons on their territories on behalf of any other country.¹⁶⁷

In Barwick's reply to the inquiry on 15 March 1962, he began by noting that the Australian Government well understood the dangers that could arise from an increase in the number of nuclear powers. Australia, he noted, did not manufacture or possess nuclear weapons; near the end of his statement, he also clarified that Australia was not then seeking them. Barwick then quoted at length an excerpt from Menzies' statement to Parliament on 19 September 1957:

There is advantage for the world in having nuclear and thermo-nuclear weapons in the hands of the United States, the United Kingdom and the Soviet Union, and in no others.

The Great Powers, apart from their enormous resources, are sufficiently informed about the deadly character of these weapons to find themselves reluctant to cause a war in which they are used. The possession of these violent forces is, in the case of these great nations, a deterrent not only to prospective enemies but to themselves.

But should the manufacture of nuclear weapons be extended to a number of other powers, great or small, the chances of irresponsible action with calamitous repercussions in the world would be materially increased.¹⁶⁸

¹⁶⁶ United Nations General Assembly, Resolution 1664 (XVI), "Question of disarmament," 4 December 1961. I am grateful to Lyndon Burford for providing this reference and the subsequent two references to UN Disarmament Commission documents.

¹⁶⁷ United Nations Disarmament Commission, "Letter from the Acting Secretary-General to the Chairman of the Disarmament Commission transmitting a report on the inquiry conducted in accordance with General Assembly resolution 1664 (XVI)," 2 April 1962, 1–3.

¹⁶⁸ United Nations Disarmament Commission, "Addendum 2 to the Report of the Acting Secretary-General on the Inquiry conducted in accordance with General Assembly Resolution 1664 (XVI): Replies from Members to whom the Inquiry was addressed," DC/201/Add.2, 2 April 1962, 5 and 7. Barwick's reply was also included as an annexure to "Disarmament and Nuclear Tests" in *Current Notes*, vol. 33, no. 4, April 1962, 27–8.

Despite the Government's desire to limit nuclear weapons capabilities to the few great powers,¹⁶⁹ in 1957 the number of states in possession of nuclear weapons, and the number of nuclear weapons, were expected to increase. Menzies spoke publicly of the advantages of the status quo, but Eden felt there was little the UK could do to maintain it. Reflecting on this time in his memoir, Eden wrote:

The period when the deterrent of nuclear power held the world in awe is fading. The wider manufacture and ownership of nuclear weapons spreads familiarity and with it an instinctive drift and carelessness. Nor are we entitled to remonstrate with others for making the weapons we have made. The numbers within the circle will grow and it has as yet no rules.¹⁷⁰

Eden was aware that the UK would be accused of hypocrisy if it spoke out against what is now referred to as nuclear proliferation, which did indeed ensue; the number of nuclear weapons states steadily increased and peaked in the 1960s before the introduction of the NPT in 1968.¹⁷¹ Furthermore, Menzies' confidence that the US and the Soviet Union would be reluctant to cause a war involving nuclear weapons ultimately would be tested over Cuba.

Returning to the UN inquiry, Barwick declared that Australia's policy and the reasons for it, which has been reaffirmed by Australian delegations to the UN since 1957, remains as stated above. Continuing this line of argument on the rights of Great Powers, Barwick wrote that "Australia recognizes the right of the nuclear Powers to conclude agreements for the stationing of their nuclear weapons wherever military necessity

¹⁶⁹ This was the Government's general policy in late 1959: Walsh, "Surprise Down Under," 6–7.

¹⁷⁰ Eden, *The Memoirs of the Rt. Hon. Sir Anthony Eden K.G., P.C., M.C.*, 578–9.

¹⁷¹ Walsh, "Bombs Unbuilt," 319.

requires.”¹⁷² Australia therefore placed no limits on the nature of allied defence assistance. Also, Tange’s minute—written just seven months later—suggests that hosting nuclear weapons would enable such weapons to remain “in the hands” of Great Powers but in a way that Australia could reap the supposed benefits of their possession. As has been demonstrated, the acquisition of a nuclear capability for Australia was of interest to the Defence Committee. While some scholars have emphasised that *certain individuals*, particularly military officers, some politicians and other officials, drove Australian nuclear ambitions,¹⁷³ this response to the UN inquiry was a clear statement of *the Government’s* policy on nuclear weapons acquisition. Barwick declared to the UN inquiry, again reiterating what Menzies had stated publicly in September 1957, that “Australia cannot undertake that under no circumstances will Australian forces in the future be armed with nuclear weapons.” Barwick stated that the Australian Government, in formulating its defence policy,

must take account of the emergence in the area of East Asia and the Western Pacific of a military Power of great dimension and some ambition. This Power is convinced of the inevitability of war and is consciously working for the elimination of the type of society of which Australia is a part. It already has massive conventional forces, which it has used against the forces of the United Nations, and has nuclear weapons potentialities which may be close to fulfilment. It has indicated that the production of nuclear weapons is indeed its aim.¹⁷⁴

¹⁷² United Nations Disarmament Commission, “Addendum 2 to the Report of the Acting Secretary-General on the Inquiry conducted in accordance with General Assembly Resolution 1664 (XVI): Replies from Members to whom the Inquiry was addressed,” DC/201/Add.2, 2 April 1962, 5–6.

¹⁷³ See, for example, Cawte, *Atomic Australia*, 106–9. For discussion of Cawte on this point, see Auton, “Opaque Proliferation,” 563. Walsh also discussed backchannel conversations between Australian military officers and British defence officials regarding the procurement of tactical nuclear weapons, stating that in August 1957, Scherger directly, if informally, requested such weapons, likely without Menzies’ knowledge: “Surprise Down Under,” 3–5.

¹⁷⁴ United Nations Disarmament Commission, “Addendum 2 to the Report of the Acting Secretary-General on the Inquiry conducted in accordance with General Assembly Resolution 1664 (XVI): Replies from Members to whom the Inquiry was addressed,” DC/201/Add.2, 2 April 1962, 6.

China, which was not then a member of the UN and seemingly did not deserve naming, obviously was the power to which Barwick referred. As a Communist state in geographical proximity to Australia, China was of major concern to the Menzies Government, and to its neighbours. As one writer put it, “Looming over everything was the fear of Communist China.”¹⁷⁵ In the words of Alan Watt, Australian diplomat and Secretary to the Department of External Affairs from 1950–54, Australia regarded

the Peking regime not only as an aggressor in Korea but also as the main threat to long-term stability in South-East Asia. The Liberal-Country Party Government under Sir Robert Menzies was strongly anti-Communist in outlook, and interpreted Chinese Communist policy as the most belligerent form of Communism [...] the Australian Prime Minister and successive Ministers for External Affairs since December 1949 have all at one stage or another seen the Peking regime as Australia’s greatest long-term threat.¹⁷⁶

When border disputes between India and China worsened in 1962 with conflict erupting in October simultaneous to the Cuban Crisis, Australia supplied India with rifles and ammunition valued at £1,025,000—and offered further military supplies up to an additional £675,000—“on the understanding that they would be used only for the purpose of resisting Chinese Communist aggression.”¹⁷⁷ As early as 1957, Australian and British officials had agreed that Australia should have tactical nuclear weapons as a possible deterrent against potential Chinese aggression.¹⁷⁸

¹⁷⁵ Rayner, *Scherger*, 148.

¹⁷⁶ Alan Watt, *The Evolution of Australian Foreign Policy, 1938–1965* (London: Cambridge University Press, 1967), 246.

¹⁷⁷ Of the £2,000,000 assistance Australia offered India, there was £300,000 worth of blankets, military clothing and wool tops. The balance was for military supplies, which were initially offered on credit, but later gifted: “Press Statement by Sir Garfield Barwick, 22nd November, 1962,” in *Current Notes*, vol. 33, no. 11, November 1962, 64–5; and “Statement by the Minister for External Affairs, Sir Garfield Barwick, 10th March, 1963,” in *Current Notes*, vol. 34, no. 3, March 1963, 22. See also Watt, *The Evolution of Australian Foreign Policy*, 234–5. For an excellent, contemporary summary of the Sino-Indian dispute and its relation to the question of Tibet, see Gregory Clark, *In Fear of China* (Melbourne: Lansdowne Press, 1967), 33–61.

¹⁷⁸ Leah, *Australia and the Bomb*, 15 and n.28, 150. Note: The correct citation for the archival record noted at n.28 is: NAA: A1209, 1957/5380.

China had extensive conventional forces and in 1955 had commenced a programme to develop nuclear weapons.¹⁷⁹ However, Australian Joint Intelligence Committee reports “reveal that little of substance was actually known about Chinese nuclear capabilities.”¹⁸⁰ The Defence Committee did not expect China to have the bomb until around 1966,¹⁸¹ but the explosion of its first nuclear device in 1964 demonstrated that Chinese atomic research and development had been greatly underestimated.

During Barwick’s visit to Washington in 1963, he was asked by the US Secretary of Defense, Robert McNamara, what Australia’s reaction would be to the acquisition of nuclear weapons by China. Barwick replied that he thought this “would impel opinion towards the belief that Australia itself should have nuclear weapons.”¹⁸² McNamara responded that this would be the natural and obvious reaction, for a country with a small population confronted with an enormous population must naturally turn to the notion that nuclear weapons were its best protection.¹⁸³ While this does not indicate whether nuclear weapons acquisition was on or off Australia’s agenda at this time, it

¹⁷⁹ “China” (country profiles), Nuclear Threat Initiative (NTI), <http://www.nti.org/country-profiles/china/> (accessed 21 September 2015).

¹⁸⁰ Wilson, “Conflicting Interests,” 110. This is obvious in the reports prepared between 1961–63: NAA: A1838, 666/62/28, JIC (AUST [Australia]) report (’61) 28, Final, “The Development or Acquisition of Nuclear Weapons and the Means of Delivery by Communist China up to the End of 1966,” May 1961, and JIC (AUST) report (’62) 28, Final, “Advanced Weapon Development in Communist China: The Development or Acquisition of Nuclear Weapons and the Means of Delivery by Communist China up to the End of 1967,” May 1962 (these reports are contained in the same file); and NAA: A1838, 666/63/28, JIC (AUST) report (’63) 28, Final, “Communist China: Advanced Weapon Systems,” July 1963. This latter report covered the period up to 1968.

¹⁸¹ NAA: A4311, 698/2, “Strategic Basis of Australian Defence Policy,” endorsed by Defence Committee, 25 January 1962, 2, para. 5, and 4, para. 12. The language used regarding the timing of the anticipated explosion of a Chinese nuclear device differs in the paper—at para. 5, the Defence Committee employed the phrase “after 1966,” and at para. 12, “by 1966”—which illustrates the uncertainty of Australian officials in light of the vague intelligence on the subject.

¹⁸² “From an ANZUS briefing paper on Nuclear Arrangements in Asia of 17 June 1965, signed by C.G. Woodard, Policy Planning Officer, External Affairs, [External Affairs] file 625/4/6,” quoted in Broinowski, *Fact or Fission?*, 51.

¹⁸³ Broinowski, *Fact or Fission?*, 51.

demonstrates what would have prompted its interest and action, as well as the fact that Barwick and McNamara were alive to these strategic considerations. It is unclear whether anything further came of this conversation.

Reflecting on the UN inquiry, Barwick up to that point had been regionally-focussed. However, he acknowledged that recent technological advances had created a sense of global nuclear vulnerability:¹⁸⁴ “no power which is concerned with its security can ignore developments in any part of the world, however distant.” Furthermore, Barwick stated that Australia “seriously doubts the effectiveness of regional agreements for the limitation of nuclear weapons in any area of the world,” inferring his Government’s disapproval of the notion of nuclear weapon-free zones (NFZs), discussed in the next chapter. Thus, the ineffectiveness of regional agreements was attributed to the intercontinental capabilities of nuclear weapons technology. Barwick also asserted that while some states could envisage participating in such agreements, Australia, in light of the region to which it belonged, could not.¹⁸⁵

In concluding Australia’s response to the inquiry, Barwick highlighted several challenges in proceeding with the approach suggested in Resolution 1664. While he stressed Australia’s “most earnest support for all genuine efforts to both general and

¹⁸⁴ For more on the concept of global nuclear vulnerability, see Benoît Pelopidas, “The closest we ever came to nuclear war: New insights on the ‘Cuban Missile Crisis’ and the 1995 Black Brant event” (presentation delivered at the James Martin Center for Nonproliferation Studies, Middlebury Institute of International Studies at Monterey, California, 11 August 2015). I am grateful to Benoît Pelopidas for sharing his presentation with me.

¹⁸⁵ United Nations Disarmament Commission, “Addendum 2 to the Report of the Acting Secretary-General on the Inquiry conducted in accordance with General Assembly Resolution 1664 (XVI): Replies from Members to whom the Inquiry was addressed,” DC/201/Add.2, 2 April 1962, 6.

complete disarmament and more immediately a ban on nuclear test explosions, under effective international inspection and control,” he asserted that the undertakings envisaged in the Resolution could not be formulated or ratified separate to broader matters regarding controlled disarmament. “[I]n the strategic calculation of military deterrence, nuclear weapons and conventional forces,” he argued, “are inextricably bound together.” As was noted earlier, this indicates nuclear weapons were thought of more as tactical weapons with battlefield application. Nor would Australia consider the undertakings without the following: the involvement of the nuclear powers (to whom the inquiry was not addressed); “certainty that all militarily significant States” would be addressed (again, a reference to China which was not a UN Member State); and some guarantee that satisfactory verification procedures could be introduced (a point that Barwick would later emphasise regarding the dismantlement of the Soviet bases in Cuba). Furthermore, Australia was “prevented” from giving any undertakings consistent with the Resolution because of “its belief that nations must be free to look to their own security in accordance with Article 51 of the Charter.”¹⁸⁶

Barwick’s reply to the UN inquiry came under scrutiny in a parliamentary debate on disarmament and nuclear tests on 15 May 1962.¹⁸⁷ The debate, which mostly focused on

¹⁸⁶ Ibid., 6–7.

¹⁸⁷ Debate resumed from 5 April 1962, the date on which Barwick had delivered a ministerial statement on “Disarmament and Nuclear Tests” and tabled the Government’s response to the UN inquiry: CPD, House, 15 May 1962, http://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/download/hansard80/hansard80/1962-05-15/toc_pdf/19620515_reps_24_hor35.pdf;fileType=application%2Fpdf#search=%221960s%22 (accessed 12 October 2015), 2318. Barwick’s statement had come about as a result of Calwell’s request to Menzies on 7 March 1962 “for a Government statement on ‘the urgent necessity for an international agreement with adequate safeguards to end the testing of nuclear weapons by all nations and to provide for universal disarmament’.” Calwell further requested that Menzies submit to the House a resolution similar to the one adopted by the Commonwealth PMs at the last Prime Ministers’ Conference on 17 March 1961. Menzies replied that he and Barwick had discussed Calwell’s requests and agreed to “take the steps necessary to allow an effective debate” in the House: Calwell, CPD, House, 15 May 1962, 2318.

the decision of the US to resume testing following the Soviet Union's breach of the nuclear test moratorium that had been in place from 1958–61, highlighted bipartisan support for the banning of nuclear weapons tests by all nations and arrangements for verification that an agreement to do so would be observed. Calwell, who opened the debate, mostly agreed with Barwick's statement to the House, noting that any differences that MPs possibly had were a matter of "differences of expression rather than of principles." One of his criticisms of Barwick's statement however, was that it lacked value because it did not address the Antarctic Treaty, in which Antarctica was declared a NFZ, or the possibility of negotiating with its signatories to have the boundaries of that zone extended to cover the rest of southern hemisphere. In fact, this was part of a broader ALP goal "to extend the spirit of that treaty to all dealings between the nations, and our objective, in geographical terms, must be to extend the peaceful areas until they cover the great globe itself."¹⁸⁸ The ALP had campaigned at the 1961 federal election on the notion of a NFZ for the southern hemisphere, and as shown in the next chapter, the concept regained momentum in the immediate aftermath of the Cuban Crisis giving the ALP an opportunity to further emphasise this aspect of their policy platform.

While Menzies did not mention Calwell's reference to NFZs, it is clear that the issue drew his ire as did others' alleged criticism of Barwick's reply to the UN inquiry, as evidenced by his reply to the Leader of the Opposition:

¹⁸⁸ Calwell, CPD, House, 15 May 1962, 2318–21.

Should Australia, not a nuclear power herself—remember that in all these matters—permanently contract herself out of permitting nuclear weapons to be used in war or defence or in the grave arbitrament of war on her soil? Because I did hear suggestions that when the Minister for External Affairs (Sir Garfield Barwick) said we were not prepared to give a permanent undertaking to that effect, he was under criticism. Under criticism! Have we reached the very ecstasy of suicide in Australia? Are we prepared to say that come war, come peace, come any circumstances, nobody shall bring a nuclear weapon on our soil or discharge a weapon of that kind there? Are we bent on self-destruction, or are we prepared to sit up and wake up to the fact that those nuclear powers which are on our side in the contest of freedom, cannot protect us if we warn them off the premises in perpetuity.¹⁸⁹

Thus, by May 1962, it was now the PM who was emphasising—this time to Parliament—that Australia's great and powerful friends could put nuclear weapons on Australian territory. It exemplifies Menzies reconciling Australia's acquisition of a nuclear capability with its policy of nuclear weapons remaining in the hands of great powers.

Barwick had stated to the House that nuclear weapons were the only way to keep the superior conventional forces of the Soviet Union in check. Proposals for NFZs, he claimed, would weaken the nuclear deterrent without weakening Communist strength in conventional arms. Menzies reiterated that a NFZ in the southern hemisphere would weaken Australia's defences. However, the Deputy Leader of the Opposition, Gough Whitlam, argued that Australia's defences would be promoted if its neighbours accepted the proposal. Whitlam also made the point that the balance of deterrents between the US and the Soviet Union would remain the same if the southern hemisphere became a NFZ.¹⁹⁰ Notwithstanding Labor's emphasis on the importance of NFZs, sections of the Party maintained an openness to Australia having a nuclear capability. Whitlam stated:

¹⁸⁹ Menzies, *ibid.*, 2326.

¹⁹⁰ Whitlam, *ibid.*, 2327 and 2329.

We say that the number of nations which has nuclear weapons should be limited to the present number ... More specifically, we say that the initiative of all the nuclear nations in declaring the area from the South Pole to 60 degrees south a nuclear-free zone should be extended to cover the whole of this hemisphere. *If any other country in this hemisphere manufactured or acquired or received nuclear weapons, admittedly Australia would have to consider its position*; but Australia should not be the first country in the southern hemisphere to manufacture or acquire or receive nuclear weapons.¹⁹¹

Whitlam implied that the ALP position on NFZs, and subsequently a nuclear capability for Australia, was therefore conditional on regional nuclear proliferation. It indicated that the Government and the Opposition were possibly less polarised than they appeared: both acknowledged that under certain circumstances Australia may find itself in possession of a nuclear capability. Whitlam's statement, against the backdrop of Labour's demands for a NFZ, meant the ALP position was unclear.

While the Treasurer Harold Holt did not take issue with this particular point, he demanded that the ALP declare where it stood on U Thant's "straightforward request" of "whether we [Australia] would permit the use of nuclear weapons in our defence, and whether Australia would ever be permitted to become a base for the use of nuclear weapons in our defence."¹⁹² Holt antagonised the Opposition over its position claiming its members were "hopelessly divided" on the issue. Holt stated that when the matter came before the Labor Party's Federal Executive, members were split, with Calwell casting the deciding vote. The matter was then presented to Labor's Caucus for its vote on a resolution, of which Holt read an excerpt: "the Government ... 'Should assure the United Nations that Australia, in its desires to make the Southern Hemisphere a nuclear-

¹⁹¹ Ibid., 2329. Emphasis added.

¹⁹² Holt, CPD, House, 15 May 1962, 2331.

free zone, will renounce nuclear tests, stock-piling and bases on Australian soil.’”¹⁹³ The Caucus voted 50 votes to 27 to refer the matter to the ALP Federal Conference to determine Labor’s policy. Holt pressed that, not only was the Opposition divided, its elected representatives had refused to determine policy on a matter vital to Australia’s security, having chosen instead to leave the matter in the hands of officials not known, or accountable, to the electorate.¹⁹⁴

Holt was rehearsing an argument that would resurface in the 1963 federal election campaign when Menzies frequently referred to the “thirty-six faceless men” that decided Labor policy. The 1963 ALP Federal Conference became a political issue unto itself when Calwell and Whitlam were photographed waiting outside a meeting of the Conference—having been asked to leave proceedings—while it determined, of all matters, Labor policy on US military bases in Australia without input from the parliamentary leaders.¹⁹⁵ Labor’s policy on bases was therefore an issue confronting the Party well before the 1963 election.

In highlighting Labor’s policy-making process, Holt sought to draw attention to the significance of Caucus’ decision given that the House was almost evenly divided. As he noted, “Two adverse by-elections could mean that Labour [*sic*] would govern this

¹⁹³ Quoted by Holt, *ibid*.

¹⁹⁴ Holt, CPD, House, 15 May 1962, 2331–2.

¹⁹⁵ For a very brief outline, and the infamous photograph, of the “thirty-six faceless men” incident, see “The 1961 election” and “Lessons of the Split” on “8. Labor and the Cold War, 1951–1967” (timeline), Labor History, Chifley Research Centre, <http://www.laborhistory.org.au/timeline#timeline/item/21/48> and <http://www.laborhistory.org.au/home#timeline/item/21/49> (accessed 14 October 2015).

country.”¹⁹⁶ The 1961 election was near disastrous for the Menzies Government. It had lost favour with many of its supporters, particularly those in business, after imposing a credit squeeze,¹⁹⁷ and unemployment had reached 2.4 percent.¹⁹⁸ According to Downer, neither he nor his fellow Cabinet members, including Menzies, realised how they had lost touch with commerce, industry, and important sections of the electorate.¹⁹⁹ A landslide swing to the ALP in Queensland returned the coalition government with an effective majority of only one in the House (once the speaker was appointed).²⁰⁰ It was the closest federal election in Australia’s history, and while the Menzies Government was victorious, it had lost 30 seats and did not have a majority in the Senate.²⁰¹ It was against this background in which the ALP almost took office that Holt asked:

If Labour [*sic*] had been in government and U Thant’s letter had arrived, what would the Labour [*sic*] government have done by way of reply to that letter? Would it have said, ‘Sorry, we cannot give you an answer to this until we have referred the matter to our federal conference’? After all, that is what the Labour [*sic*] Party is telling the Australian people now.²⁰²

Les Haylen (ALP Member for Parkes), who followed Holt in the debate, did not deny the Treasurer’s claims regarding Labor’s processes or voting outcomes on the matter. Instead, he embraced the internal party debate as a “tribute” to the ALP “that with some men strong enough to take one view, and others to hold another, the matter was taken peacefully, through a democratic process, to caucus,” and unable to arrive at a decision

¹⁹⁶ Holt, CPD, House, 15 May 1962, 2332.

¹⁹⁷ Garfield Barwick, *A Radical Tory: Garfield Barwick’s Reflections and Recollections* (Sydney: The Federation Press, 1995), 164.

¹⁹⁸ Denis Murphy, *Hayden: a political biography* (London; Sydney: Angus & Robertson Publishers, 1980), 2.

¹⁹⁹ Alexander Downer, *Six Prime Ministers* (Melbourne: Hill of Content, 1982), 13.

²⁰⁰ Murphy, *Hayden*, 2.

²⁰¹ Mary Elizabeth Calwell, *I Am Bound to be True: The Life and Legacy of Arthur A. Calwell* (Preston, Victoria: Mosaic Press, 2012), 150.

²⁰² Holt, CPD, House, 15 May 1962, 2332.

there, to the Federal Conference.²⁰³ This though, did nothing to trounce Holt's claims about Labor's Parliamentary Party having not determined a policy on the matter, and one that would not leave its members divided. Nor did his response to Holt's question about how the ALP would have replied to U Thant's letter; Haylen simply stated that he would not have responded in the same manner as Barwick:

I would much prefer to go to the federal conference of my party than do what the Minister did, using the external affairs power and using his constitutional authority to write direct to U Thant ... on the most vital issue that we have had before us—non-nuclear and nuclear clubs. He elected to do that—the little bantam dictator that he is—and would not bring the letter to this House until forced to do so.²⁰⁴

The remainder of Haylen's contribution to the debate, and the speeches of Eddie Ward (ALP Member for East Sydney) and Gordon Bryant (ALP Member for Wills), demonstrated rather than disproved the division among Labor ranks. Haylen and Ward spoke of the horrors of nuclear weapons, nuclear tests, and the risk of nuclear war; the morality and irrelevancy of nuclear tests (that they should be stopped irrespective of whether it was Khrushchev or Kennedy performing them); the importance of NFZs; and the need to ban both nuclear weapons and tests. Neither member commented on bases.²⁰⁵ Haylen acknowledged, "There are plenty on my own side who disagree with my views."²⁰⁶ Given his and Ward's outright objections to nuclear weapons, they would not have accepted the view that circumstances could arise in which Australia would

²⁰³ Haylen, *ibid.*, 2334.

²⁰⁴ *Ibid.*

²⁰⁵ Les Haylen and Eddie Ward, CPD, House, 15 May 1962, 2333–43.

²⁰⁶ Haylen, CPD, House, 15 May 1962, 2335.

need to reconsider its position on NFZs, and thus a nuclear capability, as Whitlam had inferred. However, Bryant reiterated the position put forward by Whitlam:

We do not contend that we should step forth and say, 'We renounce this for ever'. We say that in the present situation we would not use nuclear weapons and that we do not want other people to use them. The same applies, of course, to our relations with other nations. Indonesia, India and Malaya have no nuclear weapons; neither have the South American nations. All we ask is that they shall say together, 'Unless the situation takes a turn for the worse, we shall not use them and we shall undertake not to co-operate with anybody else who uses them'. We have already agreed on this as regards the Antarctic area. All we ask is that the agreement be gradually extended all over the planet. That is all we of the Opposition have to say about this, and that is what the Government should have written in reply to U Thant.²⁰⁷

Thus, like his Deputy Leader, Bryant acknowledged that while the ALP was pushing for a NFZ for the southern hemisphere, it was not "for ever" and could be overturned if the situation was to take "a turn for the worse," presumably circumstances involving regional proliferation. Again, this was in stark contrast to Haylen's vociferous protest against the existence of nuclear weapons and their possession by any power.

Both Government and Opposition members were mindful of the uncertainty of the future, but Bryant criticised the Government for not doing more in the present. The Government's response to the Acting Secretary-General, Bryant contended, read as though the UN resolution had asked Australia to accept uncritically a predetermined position. He argued that Australia should be a leading member of the UN, but the Government had quashed the aspirations expressed in the UN resolution, its reply containing

²⁰⁷ Gordon Bryant, *ibid.*, 2349.

paragraph after paragraph of non-specifics, generalities and cliches [*sic*], in which the Minister for External Affairs made it clear to U Thant that Australia, so far as the Government is concerned, does not think there is any hope of doing anything. In fact he made it look as though the Government could not care less.²⁰⁸

The Menzies Government certainly did not display any initiative on the matter and was acting to preserve its nuclear weapons options. Essentially, Bryant believed that given that nuclear weapons were not then present in Australia's region, the Government should have been doing more to keep them out. He stated:

the honorable [*sic*] member for Bradfield (Mr. Turner), the Treasurer and the Prime Minister seem to be on the verge of saying, 'We are prepared to establish nuclear bases on Australian soil'. I believe that the Australian people would reject that out of hand for, as the Deputy Leader of the Opposition pointed out, the moment we accept these weapons on Australian soil, the moment we take action to make Australia a nuclear base, we provoke our neighbours to do likewise.²⁰⁹

That in fact was exactly what the Government was saying it was prepared to do. It was conscious of how this would be perceived by its neighbours, particularly Indonesia, as is shown by Tange's minute. What was clear was that the Menzies Government was not going to make any commitments that in any way prohibited Australia from acquiring nuclear weapons in the future. While the debate highlighted the divisions within the ALP on the matter and ambiguity over its position, the coalition on the other hand had a clear policy, behind which members presented a united front to Parliament in May, reiterating their support for Barwick's reply to the UN inquiry. As noted above, Barwick made it plain in his reply to that inquiry that Australia recognised the right of the nuclear weapons states to make agreements to station their nuclear weapons where

²⁰⁸ Ibid., 2348.

²⁰⁹ Ibid., 2349.

military necessity requires. Barwick's discussion with Tange during the Cuban Crisis only a matter of months later, which is reflected in the latter's minute, is therefore wholly consistent with the Government's response to the UN. The next chapter shows that in the same vein that Australia was careful not to make any commitments that prohibited it from acquiring nuclear weapons in the future, it was careful not to make commitments to the US during the crisis that were beyond its legal or ethical obligations.

Australian Legal and Ethical Commitments to the US

With the US facing, as Menzies put it, “a very grave threat at close quarters,”¹ External Affairs officials considered Australia’s legal and ethical commitments to its most important ally. As noted earlier, Australia was a party with the US to two regional security treaties: SEATO and ANZUS. SEATO was quickly deemed irrelevant in relation to the Cuban Crisis for as one official stated, it “clearly does not involve us in obligations for the defence of the U.S.A. itself.”² ANZUS, however, received thorough analysis. This chapter examines the views of Australian officials regarding the nature of Australia’s commitment to the US. It shows how officials contemplated the legality of the Kennedy Administration’s actions and their legal, political, and geo-strategic effects. This chapter argues that uncertainty over Australia’s legal commitments to the US, anxiety over the repercussions of the Administration’s actions, and a general reluctance to become involved in the Caribbean situation, helped shape the Menzies Government’s narrow policy on the Cuban Crisis.

The ANZUS Treaty had its origins in the immediate post-war years. This was a period of increasing tension between the US and Western European countries on one side, and the Soviet Union and Eastern European countries on the other. This East-West tension also affected the Asia-Pacific region. There were newly independent states, those still

¹ R.G. Menzies, *Commonwealth Parliamentary Debates* (CPD), House of Representatives (House), vol. 37, 23 October 1962, 1781.

² NAA: A1838, 262/12/8/1 Part 1, Secret paper titled “The Cuban Crisis,” prepared by W.D. Forsyth for Garfield Barwick, Department of External Affairs (External Affairs) undated, 4–5.

trying to break free from European empires, plus divided and occupied states. Additionally, the Cold War was underway with communism seen to be advancing. From 1947–49, India, Pakistan and Ceylon obtained independence from the UK, and in 1949, Indonesia obtained independence from the Netherlands. From 1945, Indochina had been in turmoil, France failing to reassert its colonial authority following Japan's surrender. In Malaya and Burma, insurgents caused problems for the colonial authorities with Burma winning independence from the UK in 1948. In China, communist forces had made advances against the National Government, which resulted in the inauguration of the People's Republic of China (PRC) on 1 October 1949 and the flight of the Nationalist leaders to Formosa. Following World War II, Korea was divided into two hostile regimes, and after its surrender, Japan was occupied by the US and its wartime allies, including Australia. It was in this context that Australian governments pursued a regional security arrangement with the US in what must have appeared to them to be an increasingly hostile and uncertain security environment in Asia and Southeast Asia.³

Initially, however, the US showed no interest, its attention concentrated on finalising security arrangements in Europe. The unwillingness of the US to enter into regional security pacts in the Asia-Pacific meant that Australia had little choice but to integrate its defence policy closely with that of its Commonwealth allies, specifically the UK.

³ Roger Holdich, Vivianne Johnson, Pamela Andre, eds., *The ANZUS Treaty 1951*, Documents on Australian Foreign Policy (Canberra: Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, 2001), xxvii. Simultaneously, Australia wanted to secure a peace treaty with Japan to ensure it could never again threaten its security: *ibid.* In endorsing the notion of a peace treaty that would allow Japan to rearm, the Australian Cabinet insisted on a regional security agreement with the US as a *quid pro quo*: David Lee, *Australia and the World in the Twentieth Century* (Baconfield, Victoria: circa, 2006), 97. On Australian desires to enhance security in Southeast Asia in the 1950s and 1960s, see Derek McDougall, "The Malayan Emergency and Confrontation," in *Munich to Vietnam: Australia's Relations with Britain and the United States since the 1930s*, Carl Bridge ed. (Carlton: Melbourne University Press, 1991), 130–9.

Nonetheless, the Australian Government continued to lobby for a Pacific security arrangement involving the US, Australia's interest having been revived in 1949 by Communist gains in China and the conclusion of the North Atlantic Treaty, which saw the establishment of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO).⁴

The ANZUS Treaty, a tripartite security pact between Australia, New Zealand, and the US, was signed on 1 September 1951 in San Francisco and came into force on 29 April 1952.⁵ It was Australia's first major treaty with a state outside of the Commonwealth that involved military commitments. As historian Trevor Reese noted, the exclusion of the UK from the tripartite agreement was significant in that it resulted in a break with Commonwealth tradition.⁶ Prior to World War II, policymakers and the wider settler population in Australia were caught up in a colonial British identity when security alignment with the UK was reflexive, resulting in active Australian support for its military ventures. Bell wrote that Australia's commitment to the UK "was generally regarded as comprehensive, mutual, automatic, not needing to be defined in writing, stemming not from choice but from happenstance."⁷ In contrast, ANZUS represented a shift away from an automatic, colonial identity-driven alliance to a contractual arrangement,⁸ and thus it highlighted Australia's growing sense of independence and unique national identity. ANZUS was neither comprehensive nor automatic, but instead

⁴ Holdich et al, *The ANZUS Treaty 1951*, xxviii–xxxi. For example, ANZAM was established in August 1949 for the defence of the Malayan area by the UK, Australia, and New Zealand: *ibid.*, xxx.

⁵ For the key Australian official documents on the Treaty covering the period 1949–52, see Holdich et al, *The ANZUS Treaty 1951*.

⁶ Trevor R. Reese, *Australia, New Zealand, and the United States: A Survey of International Relations, 1941–1968* (London: Royal Institute of International Affairs and Oxford University Press, 1969), 131.

⁷ Coral Bell, *Dependent Ally: A Study in Australian Foreign Policy* (Melbourne: Oxford University Press, 1988), 199.

⁸ *Ibid.*

required an act of political will at a certain time by both parties. Bell noted that “Perhaps one might more precisely say that it depended on a choice by Australia and acquiescence by the United States.”⁹ While the alliance therefore was based on deliberate choice and a common interest in a stable balance of power in world politics, Australian and American officials valued ANZUS very differently. As Bell put it, “What was seen as a vital necessity by the Australians was something to be accepted with a resigned shrug by the Americans.”¹⁰ Since the 1960s, ANZUS has been a cornerstone of Australian foreign and defence policy. Its significance in this regard, as well as the contractual nature of the alliance, is reflected in the following interpretation of the Treaty by Australian senior officials in relation to Australia’s obligations to the US in the Cuban Crisis.

On 23 October 1962, First Assistant Secretary of the Department of External Affairs (Division IV), Ralph Harry, prepared Barwick for possible parliamentary questions regarding Australia’s obligations to the US under the ANZUS Treaty. Harry was the ideal person to brief Barwick. A law graduate and Rhodes Scholar, he claimed to have written the first draft of the ANZUS Treaty.¹¹ He was then Counsellor in the Pacific Section and was one of the key officials that assisted Spender, then External Affairs Minister, and Alan Watt, the Department’s Secretary, with the terms of the Treaty and negotiation of its passage.¹² Harry was a distinguished Australian public servant and

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ John Harry, “Benign master of diplomacy,” *Sydney Morning Herald*, 24 October 2002, <http://www.smh.com.au/articles/2002/10/23/1034561547232.html> (accessed 6 April 2013).

¹² Ibid.; Peter Edwards, *Arthur Tange: Last of the Mandarins* (Crows Nest, New South Wales (NSW): Allen & Unwin, 2006), 55–6; and Percy Spender, *Exercises in Diplomacy: The ANZUS Treaty and the Colombo Plan* (Sydney: Sydney University Press, 1969), 106.

diplomat whose career in External Affairs spanned almost four decades (1940–78). He joined the newly-formed Department in 1940, and after a short intervening period in the Australian Imperial Force serving as an officer and intelligence analyst mainly in New Guinea, he was recalled to the Department in 1943. In the late 1940s, Harry was posted to Australia's legations in Ottawa and Washington. He was a member of Australia's delegation to the San Francisco Conference of 1945 that saw the establishment of the UN, and a UN delegate from 1948, and was therefore involved in the formation of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Atomic Energy Commission. Following an intermission in Canberra from 1949 during which he was involved in the ANZUS negotiations, Harry became Consul-General and UN representative in Geneva (1953–56) and Australian Commissioner in Singapore (1956–57). Again, Harry returned to Canberra where his intelligence and external affairs background equipped him well as Director of the Australian Secret Intelligence Service (ASIS) (1957–60). From 1960–65, he was First Assistant Secretary in External Affairs, during which time he led several of Australia's delegations to the UN. Within the Department, he was responsible for managing Australia's Antarctic policy and treaty relations.¹³

¹³ Harry went on to serve Australia in several senior posts as Australian Ambassador to Belgium and the European Community (1965–68), South Vietnam (1968–70) during the Vietnam War, the Federal Republic of Germany (1971–75), and as Permanent Representative to the UN (1975–78). In his retirement, he was Director of the Australian Institute of International Affairs (AIIA) from 1979–81, and also published numerous works, including in Esperanto. Harry was made CBE in 1963 and AC in 1980: John Harry, "Benign master of diplomacy," and John Legge, "Obituary Ralph Harry, 1917–2002," *Australian Journal of International Affairs* 57, no. 1 (2003): 151–2. While he did not discuss the Cuban Crisis in his diaries for 1962–64 (which are scrapbooks of ephemera rather than personal journals) nor his three memoirs, the latter are insightful particularly regarding his diplomatic postings: 1962 diary, Box 11, Papers of Ralph Harry, 1941–1988, MS Acc 08/180 (unprocessed instalment), NLA (I am grateful to Kate Boesen, Reference Librarian, Pictures and Manuscripts Branch, for facilitating access to this aspect of Harry's collection); Ralph Harry, *No Man Is a Hero: Pioneers of Australian Diplomacy* (Sydney: Arts Management, 1997); Ralph Harry, *The North Was Always Near*, *Australians in Asia* No. 13 (Nathan, Queensland: Centre for the Study of Australia-Asia Relations, Griffith University, November 1994); and Ralph Harry, *The Diplomat who Laughed* (Richmond, Victoria: Hutchinson Group, 1983).

In a memorandum accompanying a copy of the treaty, Harry provided specific advice to Barwick on Australia's obligations to the US under ANZUS in relation to the Cuban Crisis. He began with Article III of the treaty: "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."¹⁴ The US, Harry advised, was not obliged to consult Australia regarding the crisis because "the threat from Cuba could not be regarded as 'in the Pacific'."¹⁵ He then turned his attention to Article IV, which states: "Each Party recognizes that an armed attack in the Pacific Area on any of the Parties would be dangerous to its own peace and safety and declares that it would act to meet the common danger in accordance with its constitutional processes."¹⁶ "Armed attack" is defined in Article V of the Treaty and is deemed to include "an armed attack on the metropolitan territory of any of the Parties, or on the island territories under its jurisdiction in the Pacific or on its armed forces, public vessels or aircraft in the Pacific."¹⁷ Harry advised that a literal reading of Article IV (incorporating the definition of armed attack in Article V), could mean that "an armed attack outside the Pacific would not bring ANZUS into action." Nevertheless, US metropolitan territory had not been subjected to an armed attack.¹⁸

¹⁴ Security Treaty between Australia, New Zealand and the United States of America [ANZUS Treaty], signed 1 September 1951, San Francisco (entry into force generally 29 April 1952), Australian Treaty Series 1952, no. 2, (Canberra: Australian Government Publishing Service), Article III.

¹⁵ National Archives of Australia, Canberra (NAA): A1838, 262/12/8/1 Part 1, memorandum on "Australian Obligations under the ANZUS Treaty in relation to the Cuban Situation," Ralph Harry to Barwick, 23 October 1962.

¹⁶ ANZUS Treaty, Article IV.

¹⁷ ANZUS Treaty, Article V.

¹⁸ NAA: A1838, 262/12/8/1 Part 1, memorandum on "Australian Obligations under the ANZUS Treaty in relation to the Cuban Situation," Harry to Barwick, 23 October 1962.

Harry was an expert on the treaty and he delivered his opinion to Barwick with confidence, but it seems that the pressure of an afternoon parliamentary sitting left little time for Harry to seek the views of others. For it was only after Harry provided Barwick with his memorandum that he sent a note to Forsyth suggesting to his colleague that he may think it worthwhile to obtain the opinion of Alf Body, the Department's Legal Adviser, on Australia's ANZUS obligations to the US in the Cuban Crisis.¹⁹ Forsyth contacted Body who, on the same day, provided a short yet comprehensive interpretation of Australia's ANZUS commitments. According to Body, the difficulty was to know whether the phrase "in the Pacific area" contained in Article IV regarding an armed attack justified the reference to metropolitan territory in Article V. He concluded: "In short I rather think that Article IV is the paramount article. i.e. that the armed attack has to be in the Pacific area to bring the Treaty into play." However, in his final remark, which he noted in parentheses, Body cautioned against a literal interpretation of ANZUS: "(But would Australia wish to employ the interpretation in the event of an attack, say, on Australia's west coast)."²⁰ When Forsyth subsequently provided Barwick with a detailed departmental briefing on the Cuban Crisis, he reiterated Harry's initial advice and added Body's caution: "Whether the mainland of U.S.A. is thus excluded is not perfectly clear and we might not wish to exclude parts of Australia which are not 'in the Pacific' (e.g. Western Australia, South Australia, etc.)."²¹

¹⁹ NAA: A1838, 262/12/8/1 Part 1, handwritten note attached to memorandum on "Australian Obligations under the ANZUS Treaty in relation to the Cuban Situation," Harry to Forsyth, 23 October 1962. I am grateful to Garry Woodard for identifying Alf Body as the person whose opinion was sought and to Allan Patience for facilitating Mr Woodard's assistance.

²⁰ NAA: A1838, 262/12/8/1 Part 1, handwritten note regarding memorandum on "Australian Obligations under the ANZUS Treaty in relation to the Cuban Situation," Alf Body to Forsyth, 23 October 1962.

²¹ NAA: A1838, 262/12/8/1 Part 1, Secret paper titled "The Cuban Crisis," prepared by Forsyth for Barwick, undated, 5.

The Indian Ocean is clearly not in the Pacific and previously, security dilemmas affecting Australia's western seaboard or lines of communication had been left to Australia to manage with the UK. The British withdrawal from the region and the extension of US power into the Indian Ocean, particularly the installation of the US naval communications station at North West Cape in 1963, *later became* convincing evidence that Australia's west coast was within the treaty's scope. Also, during Confrontation, Canberra received assurances from Washington in 1964 that Malaya, Singapore and Northern Borneo were considered in "the Pacific area", which would have been deemed encouraging in terms of the treaty's geographical application. By 1968, Australian international relations scholar, T. B. Millar, was certain there were no geographical restrictions on the treaty area to Australia's detriment: "The United States is not going to mark a spot on the Australian coast as being the limit of application of ANZUS."²² But at the time of the Cuban Crisis, External Affairs officials were uncertain as to the geographical boundaries of ANZUS.

While these legal and geo-strategic interpretations of the Treaty would have been stimulating reading for Barwick, the lawyer-cum-minister, the fact remained that it was unclear whether Australia was legally obliged to commit to the US over the Cuban Crisis. What is clear, however, is that these External Affairs officials were acutely aware of Australia's interests in terms of its commitment to its American ally. The officials were guarded in their advice: they were careful not to over-commit Australia to the US, that is, beyond its treaty obligations. Nor did they want to breach Australia's obligations

²² T. B. Millar, *Australia's Foreign Policy* (Sydney: Angus and Robertson, 1968), 119–20.

or be too fastidious in their interpretation in case this encouraged any reluctance on the part of the US to aid Australia's defence in the future. As Beale summarised (albeit in relation to Australia's involvement in Vietnam), "it was not the letter of the ANZUS Treaty upon which we had to rely, but the spirit in which it was responded to by the other party in time of need."²³ Millar added that the significance of ANZUS also lay in what other governments—who were not parties to the Treaty but involved in a situation with one of the parties—thought about the nature of the Treaty relationship.²⁴ These elements, of course, continue to change with time and circumstances. As Millar put it:

No treaty is static. Every relationship must be continuously cultivated if it is to be maintained. At any point in time, one party to a treaty may appear to be giving more than it is receiving (or, 'producing' more than it is 'consuming') but presumably it would not continue to do this if national interests were not simultaneously or potentially (in its own estimate) being served.²⁵

However, any attempts to cultivate and maintain the Australia-US alliance under ANZUS in the years immediately preceding the Cuban Crisis were dependent on the efforts of, and relationships between, Australian and American politicians, diplomats, and public servants. Although the ANZUS Council agreed to assemble annually at its first meeting in August 1952, the Treaty was not considered sufficiently relevant to justify a meeting from October 1959 to May 1962.²⁶ This was the longest period between meetings. It confirmed for the Australian government that, if it wanted to be better informed of US policy, routine diplomatic contact was inadequate.²⁷ While the

²³ Howard Beale, *This Inch of Time: Memoirs of Politics and Diplomacy* (Carlton, Victoria: Melbourne University Press, 1977), 167.

²⁴ Millar, *Australia's Foreign Policy*, 120.

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ Reese, *Australia, New Zealand, and the United States*, 143; and Millar, *Australia's Foreign Policy*, 121.

²⁷ Reese, *Australia, New Zealand, and the United States*, 144.

ministers (Barwick; US Secretary of State, Dean Rusk; and New Zealand PM and Minister of External Affairs, Keith Holyoake) agreed that the Council meeting on 8–9 May 1962 in Canberra had been “extremely useful in further strengthening the close and friendly working relationships,” they also agreed “to take advantage of their presence at other international conferences to consult in between regular meetings of the Council.”²⁸ Furthermore, the ANZUS Council was organised so that it could meet at any time, and while it was expected that it would not be convened regularly, it could meet in an emergency or crisis.²⁹ The Cuban crisis, however, did not prompt a meeting of the ANZUS Council.

This was not the first occasion that Australia was cautious about its commitment to assist the US under ANZUS. In 1954 the Australian Government refused to support a proposed US intervention in Indo-China.³⁰ The US proposed an agreement that would make Australian military assistance *automatic* following “overt unprovoked military aggression in the Pacific.” However, the Australian Government did not want to be locked into a position. Rather, it wanted to retain flexibility to evaluate the circumstances in which it would decide to use armed force. Tange described the Australian standpoint:

²⁸ ANZUS Council, “ANZUS Council Meeting: Communiqué,” in *Current Notes on International Affairs* (Current Notes), vol. 33, no. 5, May 1962, 7.

²⁹ Reese, *Australia, New Zealand, and the United States*, 143.

³⁰ Millar, *Australia's Foreign Policy*, 121.

As we understand... what they are seeking is to ensure unity of action if there is Chinese intervention in Indo-China or aggression elsewhere... We agree in the principle... that there should be joint resistance... and we would wish to do nothing to discourage resolute action by the Americans to defend the security of Asia... This however does not exhaust the situations which in American eyes might constitute 'unprovoked and overt aggression.'³¹

Essentially, Australia did not wish its participation in US military campaigns in Asia to be inevitable.³²

Even if the Treaty was interpreted rather narrowly, it was recognised in a discussion in 1954 between Australian and American officials regarding Chinese aggression in Southeast Asia that some situations in neighbouring regions may have a spill over effect into the Pacific, thereby activating the treaty. Australian officials reported that the US felt that although the Treaty was "strictly confined" to the Pacific, effects of Chinese intervention in Indo-china would rapidly extend into the ANZUS area and, "therefore, [were] a matter in which we were directly interested and on which the U.S. was obliged to consult us."³³ While a spill over from the Cuban Crisis into the Pacific and the potential activation of ANZUS was not a policy consideration contemplated by Australian officials in October 1962, External Affairs officials did consider the

³¹ "Letter from Tange, Secretary of External Affairs, to Sir Philip McBride, acting Minister for External Affairs, June 9, 1954. 'Geneva Conference–Indo China. Action in the Event of Overt Chinese Communist Aggression–United States' Proposed Minute for Adoption by Members of the ANZUS Treaty,' NAA: A5954, CS 2297/5," quoted in Christine M. Leah, *Australia and the Bomb* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014), 25.

³² Leah, *Australia and the Bomb*, 26. On the applicability of ANZUS in relation to Chinese aggression towards Indo-China, see *ibid.*, 27.

³³ "Inward cablegram from Australian embassy in Washington, DC, June 5, 1954. Text of informal 'talking paper' given by Dulles to Munro and Spender. In 'Geneva Conference–Indo China. Action in the Event of Overt Chinese Communist Aggression–United States,' Proposed minute for adoption by members of the ANZUS Treaty, NAA: A5954, CS 2297/5," quoted in Leah, *Australia and the Bomb*, 27.

possibility of NATO forces becoming involved in the crisis and its escalation into global war.

In addition to the ANZUS Treaty, Australian officials analysed the applicability of the North Atlantic Treaty to the Cuban Crisis on 23 October 1962. In the view of the Department of External Affairs, although Cuba was outside the area covered by the North Atlantic Treaty, US claims about Cuba's offensive capacity, which could seemingly be used to strike the mainland of North America, meant the crisis was clearly within its scope.³⁴ Under Article 4 of the Treaty: "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." Furthermore, Article 5 of the Treaty states:

The Parties agree that an armed attack against one or more of them in Europe or North America shall be considered an attack against them all and consequently they agree that, if such an armed attack occurs, each of them... will assist the Party or Parties so attacked by taking forthwith, individually and in concert with the other Parties, such action as it deems necessary, including the use of armed force, to restore and maintain the security of the North Atlantic area. Any such armed attack and all measures taken as a result thereof shall immediately be reported to the Security Council. Such measures shall be terminated when the Security Council has taken the measures necessary to restore and maintain international peace and security.³⁵

Geographically, an armed attack is deemed to include, according to Article 6 (1), the territory of the parties in Europe or North America or the islands under the parties'

³⁴ NAA: A1838, 262/12/8/1 Part 1, [External Affairs, specific author/s unknown], Paper titled "Cuba. Points for Public Presentation" with annotations, 23 October 1962, 2–3.

³⁵ "The North Atlantic Treaty: Washington D.C. - 4 April 1949," North Atlantic Treaty Organization, http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/official_texts_17120.htm (accessed 20 November 2015).

jurisdiction in the North Atlantic, north of the Tropic of Cancer (a handwritten note highlighted that “the tropic runs 30 miles north of Havana”).³⁶

In light of these Articles, External Affairs concluded that the applicability of the Treaty was not limited to security threats from the Soviet Union or its European satellites. Moreover, in addition to the US, NATO members “would clearly be involved” in the Cuban Crisis if the US invoked Article 4 of the Treaty, and also by Articles 5 and 6 of the Treaty following a Cuban attack on the US or US forces within the Treaty area.³⁷ Officials also noted Kennedy’s comments in his national address. As stated in chapter one, the President had declared that the US would “regard any nuclear missile launched from Cuba against any nation in the Western Hemisphere as an attack by the Soviet Union on the United States requiring a full retaliatory response upon the Soviet Union.”³⁸

Although they had little information about the reactions of NATO members to US plans for “a blockade of Cuba,” External Affairs officials were of the general impression that NATO members, “whatever the public attitudes that they may have adopted, have grave misgivings about [the] United States handling of the Cuban situation.” They also specifically noted the misgivings of the British, since the Foreign Office emphasised to

³⁶ Ibid.; and NAA: A1838, 262/12/8/1 Part 1, [External Affairs, specific author/s unknown], Paper titled “Cuba. Points for Public Presentation” with annotations, 23 October 1962, 3. The annotation was repeated on the next page but it noted it was “about” 30 miles.

³⁷ NAA: A1838, 262/12/8/1 Part 1, [External Affairs, specific author/s unknown], Paper titled “Cuba. Points for Public Presentation” with annotations, 23 October 1962, 4.

³⁸ Ibid.; and John F. Kennedy Presidential Library and Museum (JFK Library): Papers of John F. Kennedy, Presidential Papers, President's Office Files, Speech Files, JFKPOF-041-018, “Radio and television report to the American people on the Soviet arms build-up in Cuba, 22 October 1962,” <http://www.jfklibrary.org/Asset-Viewer/Archives/JFKPOF-041-018.aspx> (accessed 3 August 2015), 3.

an Australian representative in London “the absence of evidence that Cuba has received offensive weapons from the Communist Bloc.”³⁹ The Foreign Office, in other words, was not convinced by US claims. One reason for these misgivings may have been the potential for NATO to become involved in a situation about which it had not been properly consulted.

Since the 1970s, historian Joan Hoff has described the *modus operandi* of US foreign affairs as “independent internationalism”. Hoff argued that “the country’s first inclination for most of [the twentieth] century has been to act unilaterally whenever possible and to cooperate with other nations only when absolutely necessary.” Only when the US was unable or unwilling to solve a diplomatic issue through unilateral action, did it look for cooperative methods to pursue its objectives.⁴⁰ The way in which the US handled the Cuban Crisis and engaged with its allies about its course of action strongly reflects independent internationalism.

The ExComm secretly deliberated on the Cuban situation for a week before President Kennedy unilaterally determined the US course of action. As discussed further below, his initial, and unilateral, decision was to establish a quarantine. Subsequently, Kennedy issued a three-part offer to Khrushchev, which Khrushchev accepted. It included: a public deal wherein the US promised not to invade Cuba if the Soviet Union removed

³⁹ NAA: A1838, 262/12/8/1 Part 1, [External Affairs, specific author/s unknown], Paper titled “Cuba. Points for Public Presentation” with annotations, 23 October 1962, 4.

⁴⁰ Joan Hoff, “The American Century: From Sarajevo to Sarajevo,” *Diplomatic History* 23, no. 2 (1999): 286.

its missiles; a private ultimatum that the US would attack Cuba within 24 hours if the Soviet Union rejected the offer; and a secret promise to remove US missiles from Turkey within six months.⁴¹ Again, each component of this offer represented a unilateral decision and action by the US. When the US corresponded with other nations during the crisis, either bilaterally or multilaterally through the UN and Organization of American States (OAS), this was to seek endorsement for its course of action; it was not genuine cooperation. Kennedy's letter to Menzies in which he sought Australia's support for the US resolution in the UN, which was discussed in Chapter 1, is a case in point. In the crisis, the US *informed* its allies of its course of action over Cuba; it did not *consult* them.

British Prime Minister Harold Macmillan wrote in his diary that during the crisis, President Kennedy, Secretary of State Dean Rusk, and National Security adviser McGeorge Bundy had been "in continuous touch" with him and the British Foreign Secretary Alec Douglas-Home. Additionally, British Ambassador to the US David Ormsby-Gore was frequently at the White House. Macmillan's comments were in response to claims by the Opposition that the Kennedy Administration had failed to consult the British Government on the crisis.⁴² But regular information sharing is not consultation. Nevertheless, Macmillan felt that "The European and other allies had no real grievance about non-consultation." He believed that the Kennedy Administration's

⁴¹ "About the Crisis: History of the Cuban Missile Crisis," Cuban Missile Crisis, Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs, Harvard Kennedy School, <http://www.cubanmissilecrisis.org/background/> (accessed 12 August 2015).

⁴² Harold Macmillan, *The Macmillan Diaries: Prime Minister and After, 1957–66*, Peter Catterall, ed. (London: Macmillan, 2011), 517–8 (4 November 1962).

decision to send Dean Acheson to Europe to brief the NATO Council “was more than correctness demanded.”⁴³

Australia was unperturbed by the unilateral action of the US and its lack of consultation with allies. In some respects, it was due to officials lacking awareness of Australia’s less privileged position. When London’s *Daily Telegraph* cabled Australia’s Department of Prime Minister on 24 October and questioned whether it was aware of the crisis on 19 October,⁴⁴ an adviser on foreign affairs and defence, Allan T. Griffith, simply supposed the newspaper was “sniffing for a ‘lack of consultation’ story.” Griffith mistakenly assumed that Australia was notified of the crisis on the same day as the UK.⁴⁵ This issue of consultation was raised in Parliament by the ALP Member for Hughes, Les Johnson. He asked Menzies whether Australia had conferred with the UK prior to his parliamentary statement and, if not:

Is this the first time that Australia has taken a position capable of involving this country in war without consulting the United Kingdom? Does this development signify that Australia has cut its traditional ties with the United Kingdom and now slavishly follows the policies of the United States of America?⁴⁶

Menzies responded that Johnson was

⁴³ Ibid., 517 (4 November 1962).

⁴⁴ See NAA: A1209, 1962/912 (folio 41), telegram (unnumbered) with annotations, *Daily Telegraph* to PM’s press office, 24 October 1962.

⁴⁵ See *ibid.*, memorandum, Allan T. Griffith to John Bunting, 24 October 1962.

⁴⁶ Les Johnson (ALP, Member for Hughes), CPD, House, vol. 37, 25 October 1962, 1939.

in error in thinking that on all occasions of this kind we are under an obligation to consult some other country before we express our own views. Frequently we have done so; sometimes we have not done so. This was a matter of singular moment and of some urgency. We gave it consideration at once — the same morning. We did not propose to remain silent on a matter of this kind or to fail to discharge the duty to inform honourable members of the view taken by the Government.¹

What Menzies did not, of course, disclose was that Canberra had attempted to contact Whitehall, but was unsuccessful. The Menzies Government had therefore opted to respond promptly to the US regarding the crisis, unaware of the British position. The Opposition thus inferred from Menzies' apparent alacrity an uncritical adherence to US foreign policy.

The issue of consultation on the Cuban Crisis had no effect on the Government's formulation of its policy. Since World War II, Australia had done its utmost to involve itself in the strategic and defence planning of its great and powerful friends, but to no avail.² One report in 1955 noted "we are wasting our time" attempting to find out information on US planning; "We have been trying to open a mythical door to the room where this is done. There is a door but no such room. The door leads to the garden path!"³ Past experience had taught Australia that obtaining information from the US was an achievement in itself, let alone being consulted on it. Seemingly, the Menzies Government did not expect to be consulted by the Kennedy Administration over its

¹ Ibid.

² On Australia's unsuccessful attempts to obtain information on US planning in Southeast Asia, as well as NATO planning, see Leah, *Australia and the Bomb*, 16, 26 and 123. On the difficulties faced by Australian Ambassador to the US in the 1950s, Percy Spender, in assessing American defence policy, see David Lowe, *Australian Between Empires: The Life of Percy Spender* (London: Pickering & Chatto, 2010), 154.

³ "Review of ANZAM Planning by United States Joint Chiefs of Staff.' File No. 4 from Mr Casey's discussions in Washington at ANZUS Council meeting, 1955, NAA: A5954, CS1465/1," quoted in Leah, *Australia and the Bomb*, 26.

course of action in Cuba. This was possibly because, unlike its allies in NATO, it was less likely that it would become involved. Australia, therefore, was not perturbed when it was not consulted. This is confirmed by the absence of archival records to the contrary. It is also supported by the following cogent assessment of US-Australia relations in this period by former US Ambassador to Australia from 1973–75, Marshall Green, whom we met earlier in this chapter:

During my time in Australia I guess that my principal task was one of trying to redefine our relationship, which had been too much a dominant US relationship, with the United States telling Australia what to do. The whole question of consultation was involved. And by consultation I did not mean merely advance notice but really consulting. This became a really important issue. We failed on occasion to do it, and it caused a real blowup [*sic*] in Australia.⁴

Green was ambassador at a very difficult juncture in Australian-American relations. He assumed his post shortly after the Australian Labor Party (ALP), under the leadership of Gough Whitlam, took office after 23 years in Opposition. For 17 of those years, Menzies was PM.⁵ Australia-US relations were much friendlier under Coalition than Labor governments.⁶ Some Labor politicians were critical of the US and its policies, and the Coalition accused the ALP of being anti-American on numerous occasions, as is discussed in the next chapter. Such criticism caused an early and serious rift between the

⁴ Marshall Green interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy, 13 December 1988 (initial interview date), transcript, Foreign Affairs Oral History Collection, <http://adst.org/wpcontent/uploads/2012/09/Green-Marshall.pdf> (accessed 22 July 2015), 121.

⁵ The Liberal Party and Country Party, which formed the Coalition Government, had been in office from 1949–72: “Prime Ministers and Opposition Leaders: Prime Ministers since 1901,” Australian Electoral Commission, http://www.aec.gov.au/Elections/Australian_Electoral_History/pm.htm (accessed 11 August 2015).

⁶ Marshall Green interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy, 13 December 1988, 118.

Nixon Administration and the Whitlam Government, which prompted the need to redefine the alliance.⁷ This partly explains this shift in consultative behaviour.

In his oral history, Green implied that, before Whitlam came to power, the US did not make an effort to consult Australia. This is consistent both with Hoff's thesis on US independent internationalism and the Menzies Government's lack of expectations or concerns over having not been consulted by the US on the Cuban situation. Green also characterised the alliance in this earlier period as being under US domination. It is noteworthy that this is an American perspective of the relationship. While his assessment is not entirely fair or accurate in that it suggests that Australia was subordinate to the US, it does portray the inequality in the relationship that Australia at times experienced in, for example, the difficulties it faced in obtaining information on strategic and defence planning. As the next section shows, Australia also had trouble obtaining information from the UK, in this case on the crisis, with whom it *did* seek greater consultation.

Returning to the issue of the potential involvement of NATO in the Cuban Crisis, External Affairs officials considered this problematic for Australia. While Australia was not a NATO member, the possible involvement of key allies in Europe and North America exacerbated Australian concerns about its own security. As demonstrated further below, External Affairs officials were anxious about the capacity of its allies to

⁷ Ibid., 118–24. See James Curran, *Unholy Fury: Whitlam and Nixon at War* (Carlton, Victoria: Melbourne University Press, 2015).

assist Australia to defend against threats in its own region if its allies became entangled in the Cuban situation. Also, uncertainty over the level of support Australia was expected to provide to the Western allies should the crisis escalate would likely have been of concern.

Reese accurately described NATO as “both a model and a menace” for Australia.⁸ It was the type of security arrangement that Australia wanted for the Pacific and with the US, which eventually culminated in the ANZUS Treaty.⁹ However, NATO highlighted Australia’s geographic isolation. The states with which Australia liked to associate in international politics—the UK, the US, and Canada—belonged to an exclusive European and North American defence organisation. It implied that American and British attention would be centred on Europe to the neglect of the Pacific, and important policy decisions would be made in a forum where Australian views would not be heard.¹⁰ Forums where Australian officials could share views with the US, such as the ANZUS consultations, occasionally appeared to the American participants in the early years “to consume time rather pointlessly”: much more was happening in Europe, Northeast Asia, and the Middle East than in the Pacific.¹¹ The Australian Government was concerned that the US and UK would increasingly be preoccupied with Europe, especially in the event of conflict with the Soviet Union, and neither therefore would be able to assist Australia to defend against threats to its security. This was a point Tange

⁸ Reese, *Australia, New Zealand, and the United States*, 109.

⁹ The connection between NATO and ANZUS is reflected, for example, by the fact that the treaties are similarly worded, which is a result of External Affairs official Harry having lent heavily on the North Atlantic Treaty when he wrote the first draft of ANZUS:

¹⁰ Reese, *Australia, New Zealand, and the United States*, 109–10.

¹¹ Coral Bell, *Australia’s Alliance Options: Prospect and Retrospect in a World of Change* (Canberra: The Australian Foreign Policy Publications Program, ANU, 1991), 28.

consistently stressed,¹² and one that was raised by External Affairs officials with relation to Cuba and during the Cuban Crisis.

On 6 September 1962, the Australian Embassy, Washington, highlighted to the Department of External Affairs, Canberra, the volatility of Berlin in light of Soviet activity in Cuba. The Embassy's cablegram was based on an account that senior journalist at the Washington Post, Chalmers Roberts, had received from Republican leader, Senator Everett Dirksen, following bipartisan discussions with Kennedy and Rusk regarding Cuban developments (4–5 September). A key point that emerged from those discussions was “Any move on the U.S.A's part could bring a reaction in the Caribbean and Latin America and could accelerate action in Berlin—and the Berlin situation was quite critical.” Others in attendance at the White House noted that Kennedy placed particular emphasis on the potential for the Soviet Union to react in Berlin “and that he mentioned South-East Asia as well.”¹³ Thus, just weeks before news of the Cuban crisis broke, US sources indicated that the Kennedy Administration believed the Cuban situation could prompt a Soviet reaction in Australia's region.

On 9 October 1962, the Australian Embassy, Washington, cabled the Department of External Affairs, Canberra, about its meeting with William G. Bowdler from the Office of Regional Political Affairs, Bureau of Inter-American Affairs, and Robert T. Follestad

¹² Leah, *Australia and the Bomb*, 16.

¹³ NAA: A1838, 838/1 Part 1, inward cablegram (I.21907), Australian Embassy, Washington (Washington Embassy) to Department of External Affairs, Canberra (External Affairs), 6 September 1962, 1–2.

from the Office of Cuban Affairs.¹⁴ Bowdler and Follestad advised that the US State Department had been satisfied with the most recent meeting of the OAS (2–3 October) where foreign ministers acknowledged that “Sino-Soviet intervention in Cuba presented the most urgent and serious problem in the Americas.”¹⁵ The Cuban crisis would demonstrate just how serious the situation was. Consequently, in Bowdler’s view, the US “needed all the cooperation it could get from all of its allies,” wrote the Embassy. For Cuba was dangerous, not only in terms of “the global conflict” but because it gave the Soviet Union the opportunity to antagonise opinion within the US, the Embassy continued in its summary of Bowdler’s comments. The final paragraph of the cablegram brought the problem of Cuba closer to home for Australia:

It was possible to envisage a situation where United States public opinion would become so emotional as to force the Administration to reallocate its priorities in foreign policy to the detriment of key areas such as Berlin and South East Asia.¹⁶

The Government was therefore on notice as to the serious effect that Cuba could have on global and regional stability. Significantly, less than a fortnight before the Cuban crisis, Australian and US officials had already discussed the potential for Cuba to force the US to reallocate its priorities; in other words, shift resources away from Australia’s

¹⁴ NAA: A1838, 838/1 Part 1, inward cablegram (I.24933), Washington Embassy to External Affairs, 9 October 1962, 1. The Embassy simply referred to “Bowdler (Inter-American Affairs desk officer) and Follestad (Cuban desk officer).” Their full names and offices have been inserted here. For Bowdler, see “Foreign Relations, 1961–1963, Volume XII, American Republics: List of Persons,” U.S. Department of State Archive, <http://2001-2009.state.gov/r/pa/ho/frus/kennedyjfk/xii/35277.htm> (accessed 13 March 2016). It is likely that the Follestad from the Office of Cuban Affairs in October 1962 was Robert Follestad who, in March 1963, was the Officer in Charge of the Office of the Coordinator of Cuban Affairs in March 1963: *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1961–1963, Volume XI, Cuban Missile Crisis and Aftermath*, Edward C. Keefer, Charles S. Sampson, and Louis J. Smith, eds. (Washington, D.C.: United States Government Printing Office, 1996), Document 302: “Letter From Secretary of State Rusk to President Kennedy,” <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1961-63v11/d302> (accessed 13 March 2016).

¹⁵ NAA: A1838, 838/1 Part 1, inward cablegram (I.24933), Washington Embassy to External Affairs, 9 October 1962, 1.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 2.

region. The onset of the nuclear crisis would therefore have made the reallocation of US priorities all the more likely.

For Australia, the potential for a Soviet reaction in Southeast Asia and the possible reallocation of US priorities away from the region was of great concern, which the Cuban crisis only served to heighten. In other words, it was critical that the crisis did not deflect American attention from Australia's region. External Affairs informed Australia's embassies accordingly: "[i]t may be feared that the Russians will seek, under cover of American preoccupation with Cuba, to move against Berlin."¹⁷ This was deeply concerning to the Menzies Government because it needed "to prevent a situation arising which would concentrate United States attention on the Caribbean and Europe, and thus reduce her capability to take effective action, if necessary in South-East Asia."¹⁸ As shown in the previous chapter, Australia sought to maintain a US presence in its region to assist it to defend against communist threats.

In addition to Barwick and Tange's concerns about the quarantine, any precedent it may set, and its implications for Australia's nuclear ambitions, External Affairs officials also had misgivings regarding its legality. Tange was briefed on blockades by Department officials and advised that state practice seems to have overruled the views of theorists.

¹⁷ NAA: A1838, 262/12/8/1 Part 1, paper on "Points for Public Presentation" with annotations (author and audience unknown; likely Harry or Forsyth to Barwick), 23 October 1962, 2.

¹⁸ NAA: A1838, 262/12/8/1 Part 1, outward cablegram (O.19418), External Affairs to Australian Mission to UN, New York, and Australian Embassy, Washington, 20 October 1962 [*sic*], correct date: 29 October 1962, 2. See also NAA: A1838, 262/12/8/1 Part 2, outward cablegram (O.19506), External Affairs to Australian embassies in New York (UN), London, Lagos, Dar Es Salaam, Paris, The Hague, Cairo, Tokyo, and all other posts except Dili, 27 October 1962, 3.

When blockades are executed under the UN Charter by united navies to prevent war, their imposition, Tange was advised, is serious but justified; beyond the UN Charter, many jurists deemed it illegal. Forsyth wrote on Tange's briefing paper: "no clear positive legal basis appears."¹⁹ British PM, Harold Macmillan, also privately expressed the same opinion, albeit more firmly. In his diary, he referred to the blockade as "patently 'illegal'." Macmillan correctly predicted that, consequently, the blockade would "cause a great deal of trouble with neutral and even with friendly countries."²⁰

Although the timing of the briefing paper to Tange is unclear, it is highly unlikely that the legality of the quarantine was overlooked by Barwick. As noted earlier in this chapter and Chapter 2, Barwick had a supreme legal mind. It is probable that the questionable legality of the quarantine shaped the Government decision's to support the US resolution in the UN. The Organization's approval of the US resolution would have given US actions legal sanction, and therefore, legitimised them. As shown in Chapter 2, Barwick and Trade Minister, John McEwen, were specific in the language the Prime Minister should employ in his parliamentary statement on the crisis. Chapter 6 shows however, that Australia's Permanent Representative to the UN, James Plimsoll, was less calculated in articulating the nature of Australia's support.

The quarantine posed further legal dilemmas in terms of international maritime law. The Department of External Affairs later informed its embassies that "the 'stop and search'

¹⁹ NAA: A1838, 262/12/8/1 Part 1, briefing paper to Arthur Tange, External Affairs, 23 October 1962.

²⁰ Macmillan, *The Macmillan Diaries*, 509–10 (22 October).

of ships could be in conflict with doctrines of the freedom of the high seas, and may be challengeable under international law,” and subsequently, it advised them of the Australian Government’s “reservations on accepting the principle of a ‘quarantine’.”²¹

Officials in the Department of Prime Minister also had misgivings about the quarantine. Nimmo, who had delivered the documents on the crisis to Menzies at home early on the morning of 23 October, queried with Bunting whether US allies including Australia, however unlikely, may be asked to assist with the “blockade” by providing ships. He cynically remarked to Bunting: “These days, the Americans are continually looking for friends to join with them in their various enterprises.” Nimmo was reluctant to contribute to the quarantine and directly assist the US in the crisis. He suggested to Bunting that “any endorsement by Cabinet of the latest U.S. action should be in terms of support of a principle which in no way leaves us open to be called upon by the U.S. to play a part in these physical activities.”²² There may not have been a clear legal basis for Australia to become involved in the Cuban Crisis under the ANZUS Treaty, but Nimmo was certainly reluctant to make any commitments on moral grounds. His reluctance, coupled with a careful legal reading of Australia’s ANZUS obligations by External Affairs officials, demonstrates a lack of enthusiasm on the part of Australian public servants in wanting to assist the US in the crisis.

²¹ NAA: A1838, 262/12/8/1 part 1, outward cablegram (O.19418), External Affairs to Australian Mission to UN, New York and Australian Embassy, Washington, 20 October 1962, correct date: 29 October 1962.

²² NAA: A1209, 1962/912, J. F. Nimmo to John Bunting, Department of Prime Minister, 23 October 1962.

Aside from its questionable legality, the quarantine was also a cause for concern insofar as it set a precedent. For some in the Menzies Government, a quarantine could have ramifications for Australia should it host American bases and weapons in the future, as discussed in the previous chapter. This exact issue was raised by Soviet delegates to the UN, B. Ivanov, Political Affairs Counsellor of the Soviet Permanent Mission, and V. Lessiovski, Deputy Director of the Programme Division of the Soviet's Technical Assistance Board, with Australian diplomat, Richard A. Woolcott, at the UN in New York. A career diplomat, Woolcott's first posting was, interestingly, to the Australian Embassy in Moscow.²³ According to Woolcott, Ivanov asked him "what, for example, would happen if the Soviet Union imposed a blockade on say, Turkey or on Australia if she was to accept American nuclear weapons on her territory and if the Soviet navy at the request of China imposed a naval blockade of Australia."²⁴ As Chapter 3 demonstrated, this issue had been contemplated by officials in External Affairs. In his response, Woolcott focused on the undoing of the "delicate nuclear balance" that, to date, had been maintained between the US and the Soviet Union.²⁵ This supposed "balance" and the dynamic between the superpowers during the crisis and the Cold War more generally, was a subject on which he would later reflect. In his memoir, Woolcott wrote that the crisis

²³ He was later Ambassador to Indonesia, the Philippines, and the UN, as well as High Commissioner to Malaysia, Ghana, and Singapore. From 1988–92, he was the Secretary of the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade: Richard Woolcott, *The Hot Seat: Reflections on Diplomacy from Stalin's Death to the Bali Bombings* (Sydney: HarperCollinsPublishers, 2003); and "Richard Woolcott," Australian Institute of International Affairs, <http://www.internationalaffairs.org.au/aiia-authors/richard-woolcott/> (accessed 14 July 2017).

²⁴ NAA: A1838, 262/12/8/1 Part 3, record of conversation, Woolcott with Ivanov and Lessiovski, 25 October 1962.

²⁵ Ibid.

offered a good example of how a handful of people in the White House and the Kremlin, absorbed by the great struggle for global influence and caught up in the politics and exercise of power, would pursue their own interests, notwithstanding the fact that their decisions could affect the whole world.

The pursuit of national interests was a challenge facing every state. The Soviet officials at the UN had hit the crux of Australia's dilemma: how could it support the US in the crisis in a way that furthered its interests? What effect would *narrow* support for the US have on its most significant ally? Would Australia be abandoned when it needed the defence assistance of the US or would it find itself entrapped in a conflict?

The reactions of Australian public servants towards US actions over Cuba reveals volumes about alliance dynamics. According to Michael Mandelbaum:

Allies may quarrel about anything. The most serious, most basic, and most common source of friction, however, is what is after all the heart of any alliance: a state's commitment to fight for its ally. That commitment poses two dangers; every member of an alliance has, potentially, two fears. One is that the alliance will not work, that he will be abandoned in his hour of need. The other is that the alliance will work too well, that he will be entrapped in a war he does not wish to fight.¹

These concepts of the fear of abandonment and the fear of entrapment were further developed by Glenn H. Snyder, who referred to this as "the alliance security dilemma."² Nimmo's reluctance to contribute to the quarantine and provide direct support to the US in the crisis is a classic example of the fear of entrapment. He did not want to see Australia "called upon by the U.S. to play a part in these physical activities." In other words, he did not want Australia to become "entrapped" in the crisis. Mandelbaum

¹ Michael Mandelbaum, *The Nuclear Revolution: International Politics before and after Hiroshima* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981), 151.

² Glenn H. Snyder, *Alliance Politics* (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 1997). I am grateful to Jeffrey Knopf at the Middlebury Institute of International Studies at Monterey for drawing my attention to Snyder's scholarship and its relationship to my research.

acknowledged that “Entrapment is extraordinarily dangerous when it means being swept into a nuclear conflict.”³ However, it was US policy, not the nuclear nature of the crisis, which seems to have been the basis of Nimmo’s reluctance. He implied that Australia should not become involved in the crisis because it represented another example of US adventurism. As the next chapter demonstrates, this was an issue Australia experienced first-hand regarding its trade relationship with Cuba.

³ Mandelbaum, *The Nuclear Revolution*, 152.

Australia-Cuba Trade:

An Irritant in Australia-US Relations¹

Before the 1980s, scholars of international relations and diplomatic history in Australia had been inclined to stress the issues of conflict and power over the study of the international political economy. Since then, however, scholars and policymakers in Australia have highlighted the increased significance of the “‘economic dimension’ in Australia’s international relations.” David Lee wrote in 1995 that “It would be unthinkable now to think of offering an account of Australian foreign policy which did not address both its geo-economic and geo-strategic dimensions.”² It also would be remiss to do so in this thesis. Thus, with strategic considerations having been examined in Chapters 2 to 4, this chapter focuses on trade and its connection to the Australian Government’s policy on the Cuban Crisis.

In Chapter 2, it was noted that when Cabinet deliberated on the crisis, Prime Minister Menzies asked whether Australia had any trade with Cuba. The Minister for Trade, John McEwen, stated that he was not aware of any. With that, no further consideration was given to the issue.³ This chapter confirms, however, that Australia and Cuba were trading and that Australia was benefitting significantly from increased sugar exports

¹ Inspiration for the title of this chapter was drawn from Guto Thomas’ doctoral dissertation title: Guto Rhys Thomas, “Trade and Shipping to Cuba 1961–1963: An Irritant in Anglo-American Relations,” (PhD diss., University of Wales, Aberystwyth, 2001), 125.

² David Lee, *Search for Security: The Political Economy of Australia’s Postwar Foreign and Defence Policy* (Canberra: Allen & Unwin in association with the Department of International Relations, ANU, 1995), 1.

³ National Archives of Australia, Canberra (NAA): A11099, 1/59, Cabinet Notebook, 23 October 1962.

courtesy of the trade embargo the US had imposed on Cuba. Moreover, this chapter demonstrates that Australian-Cuban trade had the potential to cause a rift in the Australia-US alliance. Accordingly, McEwen's response to Menzies, and the silence of Minister for External Affairs, Garfield Barwick, who was also aware of Australian-Cuban trade and the political issues it posed, are interrogated in this chapter. While the Cabinet did not discuss during the crisis Australia's trade with Cuba (nor with the US as a result of its embargo on Cuba), remarkably, this appears to have had no effect on the Government's policy on the crisis nor did its policy appear to have had an effect on its trade relationships. Matters relating to Australian-Cuban trade under discussion at the time of the crisis were treated as separate issues. Australia, it is worth noting, continued to trade with Cuba after the crisis.

The chapter begins with an overview of the Australian-Cuban trade relationship from the 1950s to the early 1960s. This is the first time that relationship has been documented.⁴ An outline of the US embargo on Cuba follows. This explains the trade restrictions the US imposed on Cuba and the extent of its sensitivity towards its allies trading with the Caribbean island. These opening sections provide the necessary background to the main discussion on matters concerning Australian-Cuban trade under the US embargo, deliberated on before and during the Cuban Crisis.

⁴ Moreover, a history of Australian-Cuban relations has not been published. Studies on Australian foreign policy that refer to Cuba do so under the umbrella of the Caribbean, and make few, if any, meaningful references to Australia's relations with the island, let alone examine the history of that relationship. See, for example, Gareth Evans and Bruce Grant, *Australia's Foreign Relations: In the World of the 1990s* (Carlton, Victoria: Melbourne University Press, 1991), 312. Additionally, the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) website only provides a historical background on Australia-Cuban relations since the two states formally established diplomatic relations in 1989, and concentrates on events since 2009 when the Australian and Cuban foreign ministries signed a Memorandum of Understanding: "Cuba: Cuba country brief," DFAT, Australian Government, <http://dfat.gov.au/geo/cuba/Pages/cuba-country-brief.aspx> (accessed 18 April 2016). The information detailed in this section therefore relies heavily on primary sources.

An Overview of Australian-Cuban Trade, 1952–64

A trade relationship between Australia and Cuba was established before World War II.

In the post-war years, trade between the two states was minimal.⁵ The official statistics on the total value of Australia's exports to, and imports from, Cuba for 1952–64 are presented in Table 1 on the next page:⁶

⁵ NAA: A1838, 838/1 Part 1, letter from J. G. Crawford, Secretary, Department of Commerce and Agriculture, to [Arthur Tange], Secretary, Department of External Affairs, Canberra (External Affairs), 17 October 1955.

⁶ The figures are calculated according to the Australian financial year, which begins 1 July and ends 30 June the following year. Figures for the financial years preceding 1952 could not be located among the relevant NAA files. The United Nations Commodity Trade Statistics Database (UN Comtrade) is comprehensive and highly useful, however it only contains trade data from 1962 onwards: UN Comtrade, "Read Me First (Disclaimer): Every User of UN Comtrade should know the coverage and limitations of the data," <http://comtrade.un.org/db/help/uReadMeFirst.aspx> (accessed 18 January 2016). While figures from financial year 1964–65 onwards are available, only data up to 1963–64 is relevant to the Cuban Crisis and thus was included in Table 1. The figures in Table 1 were drawn from the following records found in NAA: A1838, 838/1 Part 1: letter from R. G. Casey, [Minister for External Affairs], to A. S. Fordham, British Ambassador to Cuba, 16 May 1958 (figures for 1952–57); "Trade with Cuba," memorandum by R. A. Peachey, [Head of Economic Relations Branch, External Affairs], for [Ralph] Harry, [First Assistant Secretary, Division IV], External Affairs, 16 October 1962 (figures for 1957–62); and "Australian Trade with Cuba," letter from L. D. Thomson [(Economic Relations Branch)] for the Acting Secretary, [External Affairs], to Australian High Commission, Ottawa, 14 August 1964 (figures for 1962–64). The figures listed in Table 1 were rounded to the nearest one thousand pounds sterling by the official statistician. For example, the total value of exports for 1954–55 was £133.00. It is therefore noteworthy that Australia exported goods to Cuba that year, even though this figure was rounded to nil and excluded from the official statistics: NAA: A1838, 838/1 Part 1, "Australian Trade with Cuba," memorandum from W. A. Vawdrey, [Department of Commerce and Agriculture], to Mr Body (likely Alf Body of External Affairs), 26 January 1956. Precise, rather than rounded, figures are also available for 1956–57. That year, the total value of exports to Cuba was £508.00 (rounded up to £1,000.00), and the total value of imports from Cuba was £8,109.00 (rounded down to £8,000.00): NAA: A1838, 838/1 Part 1, "Trade of Australia with 'Cuba' during the year ended June, 1957." It is therefore plausible that Australia exported goods to Cuba in 1960–61, but that the total value of exports was a nominal figure that was rounded down, and subsequently, excluded from the official statistics.

Financial Year	Imports from Cuba	Exports to Cuba
1952–53	£24,000.00	£9,000.00
1953–54	£16,000.00	£1,000.00
1954–55	£24,000.00	—
1955–56	£26,000.00	£3,000.00
1956–57	£8,000.00	£1,000.00
1957–58	£23,000.00	£6,000.00
1958–59	£38,000.00	£2,000.00
1959–60	£54,000.00	£1,000.00
1960–61	£49,000.00	—
1961–62	£48,000.00	£37,000.00
1962–63	£20,000.00	£1,000.00
1963–64	£57,000.00	£378,000.00

Table 1: Total value of Australian imports from, and exports to, Cuba for financial years 1952–64.

As shown in Table 1, Australia was a small but regular importer of Cuban goods. In this period, imports were mostly tobacco and cigars,⁷ a commodity for which the Caribbean island is well-known. In 1962–63, in the financial year of the crisis, Australia imported approximately £13,000 worth of Cuban cigars.⁸

⁷ NAA: A1838, 838/1 Part 1, “Trade of Australia with ‘Cuba’ during the year ended June, 1957”; and *ibid.*, “Australian Trade with Cuba,” letter from Thomson to Australian High Commission, Ottawa, 14 August 1964. See also NAA: A1838, 838/1 Part 1, “Trade with Cuba,” memorandum by Peachey for Harry, 16 October 1962, regarding imports from Cuba for 1960–61.

⁸ NAA: A1838, 838/1 Part 1, “Organization of American States: Resolution on Cuba,” handwritten annotation (author unidentifiable) dated 25 September 1964 on M. R. Booker’s, First Assistant Secretary, Division II, record of conversation with H. E. Senor Don Juan P. Gallagher, Peruvian Minister on 24 September 1964.

Menzies was often photographed smoking a cigar.⁹ The PM, it was reported, smoked six cigars a day, which he cut back to two when on election campaign tours in order to save his voice.¹⁰ At Cabinet meetings, a box of cigars was always provided for ministers.¹¹ According to Menzies' daughter, Heather Henderson, people knew the PM enjoyed cigars and sometimes he received them as gifts. "Havana cigars were his preference [but...] whatever he was given he would smoke."¹² Yet, despite Menzies' regular cigar-smoking, the presence of cigars in the Cabinet room, and his preference for Cuban cigars, remarkably, no Cabinet member thought to question McEwen when he told the PM he was unaware of any trade between Australia and Cuba. With regards to the basis of Menzies' question, Henderson advised "never underestimate my father's sense of humour." Regardless, the PM never challenged—then or at a later date—the information he was given.

⁹ See, for example, the following images: Baillieu Library, University of Melbourne: Digitised Collections, Special Collections, Robert Menzies Collection, MENZ00256_00001, "Robert Menzies holding a cigar and movie camera in West Germany," July 1956, <http://www.menziescollection.esrc.unimelb.edu.au/objects/D00000277.htm> (accessed 10 March 2016); *ibid.*, MENZ00226_00001, "Robert Menzies in West Germany," <http://www.menziescollection.esrc.unimelb.edu.au/objects/D00000247.htm>; *ibid.*, MENZ00238_00001, "Robert Menzies with a cigar and cup of coffee in West Germany," <http://www.menziescollection.esrc.unimelb.edu.au/objects/D00000259.htm>.

¹⁰ George Kerr, "We've Shocked Mr Menzies...", *Argus* (Melbourne), 28 November 1955, 4.

¹¹ Alexander Downer, *Six Prime Ministers* (Melbourne: Hill of Content, 1982), 18.

¹² Heather Henderson, telephone conversation with author, 25 August 2017. There is a box of Cuban cigars in the R.G. Menzies collection at the National Museum of Australia (NMA): "Wooden cigar box for 25 Partagas Cuban cigars," <http://collectionsearch.nma.gov.au/object/114098> (accessed 4 March 2016). Another cigar box in the collection is likely to be of Cuban origin: "Cigar box for Principales Pure Havana Leaf," <http://collectionsearch.nma.gov.au/object/114101> (accessed 4 March 2016). The latter box is not a well-known brand of Cuban cigar. It is possible that it was one of many brands that became extinct following the Revolution: Andrew, La Casa Del Habano, telephone conversation with author, 10 March 2016. It is also possible that it was an American or European-made cigar that contained Cuban tobacco leaf. Both the US and Austria, for example, purchased Cuban tobacco leaf. See Max Freedman, "Last Trade Links with Cuba: Tobacco now chief US import," *Guardian* (Manchester, UK), 9 June 1961, 14; and NAA: A3211, 1964/2494 Part 1, "Cuba and Austria: Trade Agreement," statement by Export Services Branch, Board of Trade, London, 4 February 1958. The NMA advised that, in light of its file on the collection, "they were most likely personal belongings rather than anything presented in a public capacity": Mikhala Harkins, Duty Curator, NMA, email to author, 16 March 2016. Henderson confirmed that she had donated the cigar boxes. I am grateful to Heather Henderson, Andrew at La Casa Del Habano, and Mikhala Harkins for their assistance with my enquiries.

Australia has exported a miscellany of items to Cuba. In 1952–53, the main export item was wool tops, and in 1956–57, essential oils.¹³ In 1961–62, in the financial year ending immediately before the crisis, Australian exports to Cuba increased significantly with the export of cattle.¹⁴ In 1963–64, in the financial year after the crisis, Australian exports to Cuba continued to increase. Tractor tyres and tubes valued at £26,780.00 accounted for part of the total export value. However, the dramatic increase was attributable to a large consignment of Australian wheat valued at £334,664.00, which China had diverted to Cuba.¹⁵ China gifted the wheat to Cuba¹⁶ following Hurricane Flora, one of the deadliest Atlantic hurricanes recorded.¹⁷

Despite the desire of Australian governments to increase trade between Australia and other states, including Cuba,¹⁸ several external factors hampered the export of Australian goods to Cuba. In October 1955, Secretary of the Department of Commerce and Agriculture, John Crawford, told his colleagues that the prospects of increased trade with Cuba were “not bright” because of US competition and the lack of a direct

¹³ NAA: A1838, 838/1 Part 1, “Australian Trade with Cuba,” memorandum from Vawdrey to Body, 26 January 1956; and *ibid.*, “Trade of Australia with ‘Cuba’ during the year ended June, 1957.” In 1954–55 (for which no exports were listed in the official statistics as outlined in n.6) over 90 percent of total exports valued at £133.00 consisted of louvers (windows and parts): NAA: A1838, 838/1 Part 1, handwritten file note by Gardner, Department of Trade, undated.

¹⁴ NAA: A1838, 838/1 Part 1, “Trade with Cuba,” memorandum by Peachey for Harry, 16 October 1962.

¹⁵ NAA: A1838, 838/1 Part 1, “Australian Trade with Cuba,” letter from Thomson to Australian High Commission, Ottawa, 14 August 1964.

¹⁶ NAA: A1838, 838/1 Part 1, inward savingram (I.29438) with handwritten annotations, Australian Government Trade Commission, Hong Kong, to External Affairs, 28 October 1963.

¹⁷ “1963–Hurricane Flora,” *Hurricanes: Science and Society*, <http://www.hurricanesociety.org/history/storms/1960s/flora/> (accessed 2 February 2016).

¹⁸ For example, during Dr. Santiago Claret’s visit to Australia in November 1954 as part of the Cuban Goodwill Mission to Southeast Asia, he was told that Australia was interested to know the prospects of increasing its exports of particular goods to Cuba: NAA: A1838, 838/1 Part 1, letter from Crawford to [Tange], 17 October 1955.

shipping service.¹⁹ The foreign exchange position was also unfavourable.²⁰ However, it was US policy after the Cuban Revolution that posed the most challenges for Australia, and other states, willing to trade with Cuba.

The US Embargo on Cuba under the Eisenhower and Kennedy Administrations

Having overthrown the government of Fulgencio Batista, Fidel Castro assumed power in Cuba on 1 January 1959. Although the US was quick to recognise the revolutionary socialist government six days later, it soon grew suspicious of the leader's economic reforms and his relationship to communism.²¹ The US sought to force Castro's demise by isolating Cuba diplomatically and economically.²² This included continuing an arms embargo against Cuba, which the US had imposed in March 1958.²³ A series of measures and counter-measures, many succinctly summarised by Nigel D. White, led to increasing hostility between the two states:

¹⁹ NAA: A1838, 838/1 Part 1, letter from Crawford to [Tange], 17 October 1955.

²⁰ NAA: A1838, 838/1 Part 1, "Australian Trade with Cuba," memorandum from Vawdrey to Body, 26 January 1956.

²¹ Patrick J. Haney and Walt Vanderbush, *The Cuban Embargo: The Domestic Politics of an American Foreign Policy* (Pittsburgh, US: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2005), 13–4.

²² US plans for Castro's demise also included assassination, which was first committed to paper on 11 December 1959: *ibid.* For further discussion on the numerous attempts on Castro's life, the US establishment of a paramilitary force for deployment to Cuba, US propaganda activities, and the sabotage and terrorism undertaken in Cuba by the CIA in this period, see Fabián Escalante, *The Cuba Project: CIA Covert Operations, 1959–62*, 2nd edn. (Melbourne: Ocean Press, 2004).

²³ Salim Lamrani, *The Economic War Against Cuba: A Historical and Legal Perspective on the U.S. Blockade* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 2013), 23.

In response to the Cuban government's expropriation of US-owned farmlands greater than 1,000 acres, President Eisenhower prohibited US refineries in Cuba from refining crude oil from the Soviet Union, significantly cut the Cuban sugar quota, and imposed an economic embargo on all trade with Cuba except for food and medicine. In response, President Castro confiscated US oil refineries in Cuba, nationalised US and foreign owned properties, and expelled a significant number of US embassy staff.²⁴

These measures culminated in the US placing an embargo on Cuba in October 1960 when President Eisenhower repealed Cuba's sugar quota and invoked the *Trading with the Enemy Act 1917* (US). This effectively banned all exports from the US to Cuba, except food and medicine on humanitarian grounds.²⁵ The significance of the cancellation of the sugar quota is noteworthy. In 1960, the US import quota for Cuban sugar was 700,000 tonnes. Sugar accounted for 80 percent of Cuba's exports to the US and employed nearly a quarter of the Cuban population. In December 1960, Eisenhower extended the US embargo on Cuban sugar for the first quarter of 1961.²⁶

In January 1961, the US severed diplomatic relations with Cuba. By then, President Kennedy was in the Oval Office and, with regards to US policy towards Cuba, simply picked up from where his Republican predecessor had left off. In March 1961, Kennedy continued the US embargo on Cuban sugar imports until 1962.²⁷ In April, he authorised the failed CIA-backed invasion of Cuba at the Bay of Pigs. In September, Congress passed the *Foreign Assistance Act 1961* (US), which prohibited foreign aid to the Cuban

²⁴ Nigel D. White, *The Cuban Embargo under International Law: El Bloqueo* (Oxon, UK: Routledge, 2015), 100. See also Haney and Vanderbush, *The Cuban Embargo*, 14–5.

²⁵ Ibid.; and NAA: A1838, 838/1 Part 1, "Statement on Cuban Policy," Office of Public Services, Bureau of Public Affairs, Department of State, Washington, D.C. (Department of State), undated, 1.

²⁶ Lamrani, *The Economic War Against Cuba*, 24.

²⁷ Ibid.

government. Additionally, it authorised Kennedy to execute a full embargo on trade with Cuba, which he invoked by means of Executive Order 3447, the *Trading with the Enemy Act*, and the *Foreign Assistance Act*. A total US embargo of Cuba, which also proscribed drugs and food products, took effect on 7 February 1962.²⁸

From March 1962, US measures against Cuba took an extraterritorial turn. That month, Kennedy extended the embargo to include items containing Cuban materials, even those manufactured in other states. From August, states assisting Cuba were automatically excluded from the US Agency for International Development programme. On 16 September 1962, the Kennedy Administration inaugurated a “blacklist” of all ships that conducted commercial relations with Cuba, irrespective of their country of origin, and prohibited them from docking in US ports.²⁹ In early October, the same month as the nuclear crisis, the Administration proposed further and wide-ranging restrictions on commercial shipping to Cuba.³⁰

The shipping restrictions, which are discussed in more detail later in this chapter, made trade with Cuba extremely challenging and thus were effective in *further* isolating the Caribbean island economically from the West. According to the US State Department, free world trade with Cuba declined from \$1.3 billion US dollars (USD) in 1959 to approximately \$247 million USD in 1962, a drop of 83 percent. Much of the decrease

²⁸ Ibid.

²⁹ Ibid., 25.

³⁰ NAA: A1838, 838/1 Part 1, “U.S.A.: Restrictions on Shipping to Cuba,” memorandum by Peachey for Harry, 23 October 1962.

was a result of a decrease in US-Cuban trade from \$881 million USD in 1959 to \$7.2 million USD in 1962, of which \$6.5 million USD entered the US in the first three months of that year because of commitments made prior to the embargo.³¹ The US measures therefore had, and would continue to have (the embargo is still in place), a devastating effect, especially on the Cuban economy.

In February 1963, the Kennedy Administration barred the shipment of US government-financed cargoes from the US on foreign flag vessels engaged in trade with Cuba on or after 1 January 1963.³² That year it also placed further prohibitions on American citizens conducting financial transactions with Cuba under the Cuban Assets Control Regulations. These measures were intended to stop Cuba from using the dollar in its international trade. Additionally, the Administration froze all Cuban assets in the US and tightened its ban on travel to the island by American citizens.³³

What is clear from the preceding discussion, as political scientists Patrick J. Haney and Walt Vanderbush have identified, is that “The embargo of Cuba is not a monolith; rather, it is made up of several components,” from trade restrictions to travel bans, and the like.³⁴ In that respect, the embargo is comprehensive and far-reaching in magnitude.

³¹ NAA: A1838, 838/1 Part 1, “Statement on Cuban Policy,” Office of Public Services, Bureau of Public Affairs, Department of State, undated, 1.

³² NAA: A1838, 838/1 Part 1, copy of a White House National Security action memorandum titled “U.S. Government Shipments by Foreign Flag Vessels in the Cuban Trade” from McGeorge Bundy to ExComm, 5 February 1963.

³³ Lamrani, *The Economic War Against Cuba*, 26; and White, *The Cuban Embargo under International Law*, 101.

³⁴ Haney and Vanderbush, *The Cuban Embargo*, 2.

Because the embargo ended Cuba's trade links with the US and severely curtailed those with the West, it increased Cuba's dependence on the Soviet Union.³⁵ The Soviet Union would replace the US as Cuba's major trading partner. Thus, as the embargo took effect, Cuba moved into the Soviet sphere, and "the embargo became embedded in the politics of the cold war."³⁶

The US embargo of Cuba had a direct and worldwide effect on commercial shipping and other states' trade relations with both Cuba and the US. The US, however, was not content with its domestic laws having extraterritorial effects. The Eisenhower and Kennedy administrations wanted their allies to likewise impose trade restrictions on Cuba. However, as the next section demonstrates, Australian governments did not acquiesce to approaches by either administration. As shown in Table 1, Australia continued to trade with Cuba.

Australian-Cuban Trade under the US Embargo on Cuba

Australian and US government views diverged significantly on the subject of trade with Cuba. This section examines those views in terms of their effect on the alliance and their relationship to Australian policy on the Cuban Crisis. The discussion concentrates on the Menzies Government's dealings with the Kennedy Administration, which went to the greatest lengths to isolate Cuba from trading with US allies, but begins with an

³⁵ Lamrani, *The Economic War Against Cuba*, 25.

³⁶ Haney and Vanderbush, *The Cuban Embargo*, 11.

exchange with the Eisenhower Administration. This set the tone for how Australia would carefully manage its alliance with the US and its trade with the Caribbean island.

On 9 September 1960, the US State Department sent a request to the Australian Embassy, Washington, for Australia's cooperation in prohibiting the export of military materiel to Cuba. The State Department noted that North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) members and Japan had already received and accepted the request. The US restricted the export to Cuba of

‘any kind of combat or non-combat military equipment’ including ‘civilian aircraft of any type, military communications equipment, unarmed patrol vessels, landing craft or other vessels of military utility as well as spare parts for all such equipment’, jeeps and trucks.³⁷

In a letter (classified secret) to G. A. Rattigan, Comptroller-General of the Department of Customs & [sic] Excise, H. D. Anderson of the Department of External Affairs advised that restricting the export of the majority of these items did not appear to be problematic; in any case, export of arms or warlike stores to Cuba in peacetime would require Cabinet authorisation. However, there was “some doubt” as to the scope of the Cabinet decision on the “Export of Arms and Warlike Stores from Australia in Time of Peace,” specifically, whether there was authority under that decision “to prohibit in peacetime the export of civilian aircraft, or—if for civilian use—of jeeps and trucks.” Consequently, Anderson advised the Embassy to inform the State Department that in the interest of mutual consultation on the subject, “we would certainly wish to inform and

³⁷ NAA: A425, 1971/6758, “Arms Shipments to Cuba & the Dominican Republic,” letter (classified secret) from H. D. Anderson for the Secretary, External Affairs, to [G. A. Rattigan], Comptroller-General, Department of Customs & Excise (Customs & Excise), 14 November 1960.

consult the United States if any question arose of supply to Cuba [...] of arms or warlike stores in the categories mentioned.” In effect, the Australian Government declined the US request. According to Anderson, the wording was specifically chosen in order “to avoid committing ourselves in advance to a ‘blanket’ prohibition of all the items mentioned.” In light of this advice, the Department of Customs & Excise was instructed to consult the Department of External Affairs on all applications to export warlike stores, civil aircraft, trucks or jeeps to Cuba.³⁸ Thus, Australia’s judicious management of its geo-strategic and geo-economic interests in relation to Cuba began in 1960: it acknowledged US concerns in the interests of maintaining the alliance, but it was careful not to place wide-ranging prohibitions on exports to Cuba to avoid unnecessarily restricting Australian-Cuban trade. Australian governments upheld this position throughout the early 1960s but, as shown below, they found doing so most challenging under the Kennedy Administration.

On 16 February 1962, First Assistant Secretary in the Department of External Affairs, Ralph Harry, noted that, at a social event, he was asked by the Chargé d’Affaires at the US Embassy in Canberra, William Belton, whether Australia “had had occasion to take an attitude on trade with Cuba.” Harry replied that he did not understand what Belton meant by “taking an attitude.” Harry stated that Australian-Cuban trade was not large, which subsequently led to a discussion about negotiations underway regarding the sale

³⁸ Ibid. For the Cabinet decision, see NAA: A4638, SET 1, “Minutes of Meeting of Cabinet: 100 – Export of Arms and Warlike Stores from Australia in Time of Peace,” 27–28 June 1950. Regarding Cabinet authorisation, see section (A)(iii) of the Cabinet decision. By October 1964, the only goods exported to Cuba in terms of the categories of warlike stores, civil aircraft, trucks or jeeps were tyres: NAA: A425, 1971/6758, minute paper, W. W. Moore, Acting Assistant Comptroller-General (General), to [Kenneth Anderson], Minister, Customs & Excise, 8 October 1964, 1.

of two aircraft by a Cuban airline to two Australian airlines.³⁹ In his record of conversation, Harry recounted: “I said I had never quite understood the rationale of the U.S. trade ban on Cuba. After all the U.S. traded with [the] U.S.S.R. Was it because Cuba had expropriated the property of U.S. nationals?” Harry wrote that Belton responded that

U.S. policy was based on actual attempts by Cuba to foment revolution in other American states—not just ideological propaganda but actual organisation of Communist revolts. For this reason the U.S. wished to deny Cuba foreign exchange.⁴⁰

Thus, the US saw its trade restrictions as essential to preventing states like Cuba from emerging in the Western hemisphere. For the US, politics and economics were inseparable. It was something of which Australian Ambassador to the US from 1951–58, Percy Spender, was cognisant. In a letter to Menzies in 1952 in which he detailed carefully plans to intertwine Australia’s trade and finance with the US, Spender advised:

³⁹ NAA: A1838, 838/1 Part 1, “Cuba—Sale of Aircraft,” Harry’s record of conversation with W. Belton, Chargé d’Affaires, US Embassy on 10 February 1962, undated. Belton was Charge d’Affaires for almost nine months between the ambassadorships of William J. Sebald and William C. Battle. He was ordinarily Deputy Chief of Mission, Canberra, which was a post he occupied from 1960–63: William Belton interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy, 19 November 1992, transcript, Foreign Affairs Oral History Collection, Association for Diplomatic Studies and Training, Arlington, Virginia, <http://www.adst.org/OH%20TOCs/Belton,%20William.toc.pdf> (accessed 21 January 2016), 34–8. Regarding the aircraft sales, Ansett-ANA (Australian National Airways) and Trans-Australia Airlines (TAA) were negotiating with El Cubana, the Cuban government airline, to purchase one Viscount aircraft each: NAA: A1838, 714/3/8 Part 1, “Australian Trade with Cuba,” submission by W. D. Forsyth, Assistant Secretary, Division II, [External Affairs], to [Barwick], Minister [for External Affairs], 5 April 1962, 1.

⁴⁰ NAA: A1838, 838/1 Part 1, “Cuba—Sale of Aircraft,” Harry’s record of conversation with W. Belton, Charge d’Affaires, US Embassy on 10 February 1962, undated.

I must add that economic co-operation with the U.S.A. has important political and security aspects for Australia that I hardly need do more than merely mention to you. The United States official is not as inclined as his United Kingdom counterpart to draw a firm line between political and economic co-operation and to regard as friendly those countries that co-operate politically even though they will not co-operate economically. In laying plans for our economic future we must not ignore the political and strategical [*sic*] implications.⁴¹

Regarding Cuba, Australia would learn first-hand the importance the US placed on economic cooperation.

The Australian Government deplored Castro's Cuba but saw no reason to discontinue trading with it, even if its views conflicted with those of the Kennedy Administration. This was consistent with Australia's relations with other communist states. Australia aligned itself with the West against the Soviet Union and the People's Republic of China (China) despite continuing to trade with both states. Regarding China, Australia actively encouraged and cooperated in activities that, with hindsight, might be judged as detrimental to its interests.⁴² For example, Australia, under Liberal-Country Party coalition governments, did not recognise China and vigorously opposed it replacing Taiwan in the UN.⁴³ The absence of any further discussion of Harry and Belton's conversation among the archival records suggests that meanwhile, the governments, or the American Government to be more precise, were content to let the matter lie.

⁴¹ "Letter, Spender to Menzies, 29 April 1952 [Spender Papers, Box 1, fol. 3, MS4875, NLA]," quoted in David Lowe, *Australian Between Empires: The Life of Percy Spender* (London: Pickering & Chatto, 2010), 151.

⁴² Gregory Clark, *In Fear of China* (Melbourne: Lansdowne Press, 1967), 163.

⁴³ China was admitted in 1971. See Claire Clark, "Australia in the United Nations," in *Australian Foreign Policy: Towards a Reassessment*, Claire Clark, ed. (North Melbourne: Cassell Australia, 1973), 130 and 139–42.

The Australian Government's willingness to maintain economic relations with Cuba, despite finding its philosophy repugnant, was comparable with the Canadian Government's attitude. Neither government had a desire to follow the US lead and impose a trade embargo on Cuba. On 2 February 1962, Canadian Prime Minister, John Diefenbaker, made it plain that Canada would determine its own policy on the issue, and was quoted as having stated that it would do so "having regard always to the need of maintaining intact the determination of the free world to resist communism." His statement was in response to US Secretary of State, Dean Rusk, who had made statements to the press "to the effect that earnings by Cuba on her exports to Canada might be used 'to promote communist subversion in neighbouring countries.'"⁴⁴ Subsequently, the press had anticipated that the US would attempt to persuade its allies to restrict trade with Cuba.⁴⁵ That said, the US had not made any "normal diplomatic approach" to Canada or, as far as the Canadian Department of External Affairs was aware, other NATO allies as at 9 February 1962 to impose a comparable trade embargo on Cuba.⁴⁶ Nor was Australia *officially* approached by the US once the latter's full embargo on Cuba took effect on 7 February 1962.⁴⁷ Nevertheless, by mid-February 1962 US officials had made *informal* diplomatic approaches to Western allies, such as Australia and Canada, regarding their trade relations with Cuba. Harry's conversation with Belton outlined above is one example of such an approach. While the US was aware of Australia's trade with Cuba, Canada, as a neighbour of the US and key

⁴⁴ NAA: A1838, 838/1 Part 1, "Cuba and O.A.S.," inward savingram (I.3315), Australian High Commission, Ottawa to External Affairs, 9 February 1962, 2.

⁴⁵ "U.S. May Seek U.K. Cut in Trade with Cuba," *Financial Times* (London), 5 February 1962, 15.

⁴⁶ NAA: A1838, 838/1 Part 1, "Cuba and O.A.S.," inward savingram (I.3315), Australian High Commission, Ottawa to External Affairs, 9 February 1962, 1. However, Cuba was discussed when US Under Secretary of State, George Ball, visited Ottawa at the beginning of that month: *ibid.*

⁴⁷ NAA: A1838, 838/1 Part 1, handwritten annotation on inward cablegram (I.4122), Australian Embassy, Washington (Washington Embassy) to External Affairs, 20 February 1962.

member of the region, was clearly under much closer scrutiny and criticism from the US. Australia, nonetheless, began to pay careful attention to US sensitivity over Cuba.

In mid-March 1962, Australian subsidiaries of US parent firms enquired with the Department of Customs & Excise whether it would grant licences for the export to Cuba of train, tractor and truck parts to the value of approximately £3,500,000.00. This was a consequence of the US trade embargo on Cuba as the US firms could no longer supply spare parts for their machinery. The Department of Customs & Excise informed the Department of External Affairs, which advised that while Australia did not prohibit trade with Cuba, the “political implications” warranted consideration. Specifically, there was concern as to

the possible adverse reaction in the U.S.A. if Australia appeared to be helping Cuba circumvent the American embargo and [...] the U.S. Government’s attitude to Australian subsidiaries of U.S. firms becoming the instrument for such circumvention.⁴⁸

However, there were also political implications in Australia to consider, specifically, “the current unemployment situation,” if exports of such high value were denied.⁴⁹ By February 1962, 131,500 people were unemployed, the greatest number since World War II.⁵⁰ The Australian subsidiaries were asked to submit export licence applications for consideration.⁵¹

⁴⁸ NAA: A1838, 714/3/8 Part 1, “Australian Trade with Cuba,” memorandum from R. H. Gardner, [Americas and South Pacific Branch, External Affairs], to Mr. McNicol, 15 March 1962.

⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁰ Paul Davey, *The Nationals: The Progressive, Country and National Party in New South Wales 1919 to 2006* (Sydney: The Federation Press, 2006), 181.

⁵¹ NAA: A1838, 714/3/8 Part 1, “Australian Trade with Cuba,” memorandum from Gardner to McNicol, 15 March 1962.

On 20 March 1962 External Affairs sought British and Canadian policy on exports to Cuba of this nature, as well as those of strategic significance, to assist with their deliberations.⁵² Essentially, the issues to be determined were whether Australia would permit: goods of US origin imported to Australia to be transhipped (or re-exported) to Cuba, and goods manufactured by Australian subsidiaries of US firms to be exported to Cuba. Meanwhile, the US demonstrated how it would deal with actions perceived contrary to U.S. export regulations. On 22 March 1962, it temporarily denied US export privileges to British export-import firm, Latin American Development Co. Ltd. According to a United States Information Service bulletin on the matter, the decision was made to stop the firm from obtaining US goods for transshipment to Cuba while investigations regarding a violation of US export regulations were being undertaken.⁵³ The Bureau of International Programmes of the US Department of Commerce, which was conducting the investigation, was said to have stated that the British firm had “persisted in attempts to place orders with U.S. suppliers” for spare parts for oil processing equipment “even after being informed that the goods would not be licensed by the United States for direct or indirect shipment to Cuba.” The US suppliers were instructed to ship the parts to the UK but they were not informed that they would then be shipped to Cuba. The US suppliers however, who were credited for their “alertness,”

⁵² NAA: A1838, 714/3/8 Part 1, outward cablegram (O.4661), External Affairs to Australian High Commission, London, Australian High Commission, Ottawa, and Washington Embassy, 20 March 1962.

⁵³ NAA: A1838, 714/3/8 Part 1, “British Firm Temporarily Denied U.S. Export Privileges,” United States Information Service bulletin, 22 March 1962, forwarded by memorandum from G.D. Vincent, Trade Relations Officer, Trade Office, Australian High Commission, London, to [W.A. Westerman], Secretary, Department of Trade, 26 March 1962. In the memorandum, Westerman was simply referred to by his position; his full name has been inserted here. See John Farquharson, “Westerman, Sir Wilfred Alan (1913–2001),” *Obituaries Australia*, National Centre of Biography, ANU, <http://oa.anu.edu.au/obituary/westerman-sir-wilfred-alan-1022> (accessed 6 April 2016).

prevented the sales from proceeding.⁵⁴ One Australian official noted that the US could stop the “re-export” (transshipment) of goods from Australia “in the same way.”⁵⁵

On 5 April 1962, Assistant Secretary in Division II of the Department of External Affairs, W. D. Forsyth, prepared a submission for Barwick on Australian trade with Cuba. This was by then in response to two enquiries received by the Department of Customs & Excise: an export licence application from Overseas Business Associates Pty. Ltd. valued at £1,000,000.00 (Australian) to export agricultural tractors and spare parts to Cuba for railway and agricultural machinery, half of which would be of US origin and transhipped from Australia to Cuba, and the other half of Australian origin; and an enquiry from Broken Hill Propriety Company Limited (BHP) regarding “whether they may tender for 10,000 tons of steel ingot for Cuba,” valued at £300,000.00 (Australian). Forsyth explained that these approaches stemmed from the US trade embargo of Cuba, the latter now needing to source spare parts for its stock of US machinery from alternative suppliers. Australia (as well as Canada) was considered “an obvious choice” in light of its advanced industrial development and capability to fabricate equipment and parts, and thus, further enquiries of this nature were anticipated. Consequently, ministerial direction on Australia’s future policy was

⁵⁴ NAA: A1838, 714/3/8 Part 1, “British Firm Temporarily Denied U.S. Export Privileges,” United States Information Service bulletin, 22 March 1962, forwarded by memorandum from Vincent to [Westerman], 26 March 1962.

⁵⁵ NAA: A1838, 714/3/8 Part 1, handwritten note (author unknown) dated 11 April 1962 on the slip “With the Compliments of the Secretary, Department of Trade” covering the memorandum from Vincent to Westerman, 26 March 1962.

necessary because “the question of Australia’s trade relations directly concerns our relations with the U.S.A.”⁵⁶

Having summarised the American, Canadian, and British trade policies towards Cuba, Forsyth advised Barwick that Australian policy could range between the two extremes of “complete freedom of trade and a total embargo.” He outlined five possible policies for the Government. First, Australia could choose not to intervene, leaving the decision in the hands of individual exporters.⁵⁷ This was the British policy. Henry A. A. Hankey, Head of the Foreign Office’s American Department from 1956–62,⁵⁸ advised the Australian High Commission, London—in confidence—that the Foreign Office did not want to appear to have intervened against Castro nor jeopardise the British Embassy in Havana whose reports were valuable, not only to the UK, but to the US. In terms of shipping, it was up to the firms involved to decide if they wanted to undertake trade with Cuba. If they enquired with the British Government whether they should do so, that is what they would be told. However, they would also be advised that the US may make their future trade activities more difficult.⁵⁹ Second, Australia could impose a trade embargo on Cuba, just like the US had done. Third, it could prohibit the transshipment of goods of US origin to Cuba, which was Canadian policy. Fourth, Australia could apply the Coordinating Committee for Multilateral Export Controls

⁵⁶ NAA: A1838, 714/3/8 Part 1, “Australian Trade with Cuba,” submission by Forsyth to [Barwick], 5 April 1962, 1–2.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, 2–3.

⁵⁸ “A Directory of British Diplomats,” updated 8 March 2016, <http://www.gulabin.com/britishdiplomatsdirectory/pdf/britishdiplomatsdirectory.pdf> (accessed 13 March 2016), 222.

⁵⁹ NAA: A1838, 838/1 Part 1, inward cablegram (I.7056), “Exports to Cuba,” Australian High Commission, London to External Affairs, 23 March 1962, 1–2.

(COCOM) list to Cuba, which was also Canadian policy.⁶⁰ These controls prohibited the export of strategic materials to “European and China Communist Bloc areas,” and had their origins in Paris in 1949 when the NATO states (except Iceland) and Japan met to formulate a common policy.⁶¹ Fifth, Australia could apply the “China differential.” Aside from the US which imposed a trade embargo, only Australia, Canada, and Turkey imposed special restrictions on trade with China.⁶² The “China differential” listed a range of banned export items, including steel, tractors, and railway equipment. However, there was an “exceptions” procedure under which items could be exported with ministerial approval, and previously, steel had been approved for export. This was relevant because the items that formed the basis of the enquiries to the Department of Customs & Excise (for example, the agricultural tractors, spare parts for railway and agricultural machinery, and steel ingot) came under the “China differential.”⁶³

To summarise Australia’s economic relations with China, the government took into serious consideration the views of the US—which was strongly opposed to trade with China, in addition to Cuba—particularly regarding strategic items. But within those limits, Australia traded extensively with China in what it classed as non-strategic

⁶⁰ NAA: A1838, 714/3/8 Part 1, “Australian Trade with Cuba,” submission by Forsyth to [Barwick], 5 April 1962, 3.

⁶¹ This “Paris Group” established COCOM to manage its daily business and it is from the Coordinating Committee that the lists derive their name: NAA: A425, 1971/6758, minute paper, Moore to [Kenneth Anderson], Minister for Customs & Excise, 8 October 1964, 2.

⁶² NAA: A1838, 714/3/8 Part 1, “Australian Trade with Cuba,” submission by Forsyth to [Barwick], 5 April 1962, 3. However, the Australian High Commission, Ottawa, advised External Affairs on 27 March 1962 (and thus prior to the preparation of this submission) that Canada simply maintained one export control list and that a “separate China differential has not existed for some years”: *ibid.*, “Exports to Cuba,” inward cablegram (I.7398), Australian High Commission, Ottawa to External Affairs, 27 March 1962.

⁶³ NAA: A1838, 714/3/8 Part 1, “Australian Trade with Cuba,” submission by Forsyth to [Barwick], 5 April 1962, 3.

items.⁶⁴ Political scientist Henry S. Albinski described Australia's restrictions on China as "a very successful exercise in *realpolitik*," which could "variously be regarded as inconsistent, secretive, or hypocritical. But at bottom it is pretty much a case of having one's cake and eating it too." Albinski argued:

Maintaining a stiff strategic materials policy helps to placate America, to make her more sympathetic towards expressed Australian views on international questions in general, and perhaps even softens her objections to Australia's non-strategic trade with China. Maintaining the 'China differential' also serves to deter potentially embarrassing political criticism at home.⁶⁵

What was to be determined therefore was whether, in terms of trade, Cuba should receive the same treatment as China. What was certain was that the Australian Government had experience managing differences with the US over trade policy.

There were a number of factors to consider in determining the appropriate policy or combination of policies on Australia's future trade with Cuba. Expanding markets in Cuba meant new outlets for Australian exports, which aligned with the Government's export drive. Nevertheless, it was acknowledged that Cuba's limited foreign currency and the reluctance of Australian exporters to sell on credit could hamper Australian-Cuban trade. The other factor, and one that weighed heavily, was the effect of Australian-Cuban trade on Australia-US relations. Forsyth noted that while the US had not *formally* approached Australia about its trade with Cuba, the Americans had commented *informally* at the time of the negotiations for the purchase of the Cuban

⁶⁴ Alan Watt, *The Evolution of Australian Foreign Policy, 1938–1965* (London: Cambridge University Press, 1967), 244.

⁶⁵ Henry S. Albinski, "Australia and the Chinese strategic embargo," *Australian Outlook* 19, no. 2 (1965): 127–8. See also, Henry S. Albinski, *Australian Policies and Attitudes toward China* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1965), chs. VI and VII.

aircraft “that they hoped our trade with Cuba would not be expanded to any significant degree.” It was felt that the US, having imposed an embargo on Cuba, would not appreciate Australia replacing them in that market. It was necessary for Australia to consider US sensitivity towards trade with Cuba, and thus, the possibility of restricting its own trade with the Caribbean island for the following reasons: the importance of the US alliance to Australia’s defence; the special relations between the two states under ANZUS; the position taken by the US towards Cuba, and was considered by the White House and Congress “as a threat to the security of the American hemisphere”; the possibility that Australia may need “to invoke United States economic pressure against Indonesia should that country ever become Communist,” a concern that was discussed in Chapter 3; and Australia’s need for US support regarding trade issues, such as American understanding of Australian concerns over the UK possibly joining the European Economic Community (EEC), or Common Market, as it was widely known.⁶⁶

UK interest in entering the Common Market was the cause of much concern for the Australian Government, which, as has been noted, was already facing economic difficulties. Fifteen to 20 percent of Australia’s exports went to the UK where they were accorded preferential treatment,⁶⁷ and thus the Government was worried about the “‘serious adverse consequences’ for the Australian economy from a loss of a preferred

⁶⁶ NAA: A1838, 714/3/8 Part 1, “Australian Trade with Cuba,” submission by Forsyth to [Barwick], 5 April 1962, 4.

⁶⁷ National Archives and Records Administration, College Park, Maryland, US (NARA): Record Group (RG) 59, General Records of the Department of State, Central Decimal File (CDF), 1960–63, from 843.00/1-460 to 843.0051K/1-362, box 2495, file 843.00/4-1461, “Biweekly Economic Review No. 13 for the period ended July 7, 1961” (official use only, except as indicated) prepared by Eddie W. Schodt, First Secretary of Embassy, for the Ambassador [to Australia], [William J. Sebald], and forwarded by American Embassy, Canberra (American Embassy) to Department of State, Washington, 7 July 1961, 2 (section official use only). For more on Sebald and his ambassadorship, see “U.S. Chiefs of Mission to Australia: William J. Sebald,” Embassy of the United States, Canberra, Australia, <http://canberra.usembassy.gov/history/chiefsmission/sebald.html> (accessed 13 April 2016).

position in the U.K. market.” It was also concerned that UK membership in the Common Market could weaken the Commonwealth.⁶⁸ Although the Australian Government was already working to expand Australia’s export markets, the US Embassy in Canberra believed Australia’s anxiety over the potential loss of its preferential market in the UK intensified its search for alternative markets.⁶⁹ When McEwen was asked by a journalist at a press conference whether the Department of Trade was in fact studying other outlets for Australian exports in case the UK entered the Common Market, the Minister stated “No, I wouldn’t for a moment reveal the defeatism implicit in that.”⁷⁰ Nevertheless, trade missions had visited Asia and South America in January 1962⁷¹ and would travel to the Caribbean and Central America in mid-October 1962. The mission, however, did not visit Cuba.⁷²

Meanwhile, Australia’s need to obtain US understanding over its concerns regarding the UK and the Common Market was proving difficult. At a press conference on 26 April 1962 following an overseas tour to the US, Canada, the UK, and the EEC member

⁶⁸ NARA: RG 59, General Records of the Department of State, CDF, 1960–63, from 843.00/1-460 to 843.0051K/1-362, box 2495, file 843.00/4-1461, “Biweekly Economic Review No. 14 for the period ended July 21, 1961” (official use only, except as indicated) prepared by Schodt for the Ambassador [to Australia, Sebald], and forwarded by American Embassy to Department of State, Washington, 21 July 1961, 2 (section unclassified).

⁶⁹ NARA: RG 59, General Records of the Department of State, CDF, 1960–63, from 843.00/1-460 to 843.0051K/1-362, box 2495, file 843.00/1-562, “Semi-Annual Economic Summary, Second Half 1961” (unclassified) prepared by Schodt for the Charge d’Affaires ad interim, [William Belton], and forwarded by American Embassy to Department of State, 1 February 1962, 9. Regarding Belton, see n.39.

⁷⁰ “Trade Minister Not Confident of Continuing Access to Markets of U.K. and Europe,” *Age* (Melbourne), 27 April 1962, 6.

⁷¹ NARA: RG 59, General Records of the Department of State, CDF, 1960–63, from 843.00/1-460 to 843.0051K/1-362, box 2495, file 843.00/1-562, “Semi-Annual Economic Summary, Second Half 1961” (unclassified) prepared by Schodt for the Charge d’Affaires ad interim, [Belton], and forwarded by American Embassy to Department of State, 1 February 1962, 9.

⁷² NARA: RG 59, General Records of the Department of State, CDF, 1960–63, from 843.00/1-460 to 843.0051K/1-362, box 2495, file 843.00/1-562, “Biweekly Economic Review No. 12 for the Period Ended June 7, 1962” (official use only, except as indicated) prepared by Schodt for the Charge d’Affaires ad interim, [Belton], and forwarded by American Embassy to Department of State, Washington, 8 June 1962, 4 (section unclassified).

states, McEwen criticised the US over its trade policies and its opposition to the UK continuing trade preferences should it enter the Common Market.⁷³ He again delivered a sharp public criticism of US policy towards the Common Market in May 1962, referring to several “elements” which were of “grave concern” to Australia.⁷⁴ The US Embassy in Wellington told US Secretary of State, Dean Rusk, that Australia thought the US was selfishly interested in a system of free trade for its own goods. As the US Embassy in Wellington put it: “Australia feels US feathering its own nest and in process destroying their sheltered market in UK.”⁷⁵ It was a brusque but accurate assessment of what McEwen would be reported as having stated to the press just days later. However, Menzies’ visit to the US in June 1962 to discuss Common Market developments was reported positively in the press. The *Age* reported that McEwen’s comments “had irritated but had not moved” the US,⁷⁶ whereas now, the two states were “nearer to harmony on Common Market problems.”⁷⁷ The *Age* editorialised that the joint communique, in which Australian and US officials agreed to a commodity-by-commodity study of the effect on their trade of UK entry into the Common Market, was “the strongest indication that some shift has in fact taken place in the American attitude.”⁷⁸ What was clear was that trade was a significant factor to be considered and managed in Australia’s relations with the US.

⁷³ “Trade Minister Not Confident of Continuing Access to Markets of U.K. and Europe,” *Age*, 27 April 1962, 6.

⁷⁴ “Trade Minister in Sharp Reply to Mr. Rusk: ‘U.S. Not Living Up to Own Precepts’,” *Age*, 14 May 1962, 1.

⁷⁵ NARA: RG 59, General Records of the Department of State, CDF, 1960–63, from 843.00/1-460 to 843.0051K/1-362, box 2495, file 843.00/1-562, incoming telegram (secret) (control: 7122), from [US Embassy], Wellington, to Secretary of State, [Dean Rusk], Department of State, received 10 May 1962.

⁷⁶ John Bennetts, “Mr. Menzies’ Mission: Significant American Shift on Market Policy,” *Age*, 22 June 1962, 2.

⁷⁷ “Accord Near on Market Approach,” *Age*, 22 June 1962, 1.

⁷⁸ “Something Has Been Gained” (editorial), *Age*, 22 June 1962, 2. On the commodity-by-commodity study, see “Differences with U.S. Reduced: Mutual Approach on Market Possible,” *Age*, 22 June 1962, 4.

Forsyth recommended that Australian policy on trade with Cuba, at least initially, “should lie somewhere between the two extremes” that he had suggested; that is, between an embargo and non-intervention. There was no reason, Forsyth wrote, for Australia to impose a trade embargo on Cuba: it was not involved in the US dispute with Cuba; members of the Organization of American States (OAS) had refused to impose one and thus there was little justification for Australia doing so; nor had the US asked Australia. Nonetheless, given the close relationship between Australia and the US, it was hoped that the former could explain to the latter that the policy so determined represented “a reasonable balance between our external policy (alliance with the U.S.A.) and our domestic policy (need for widening our markets overseas),” which was intended “not to have a major effect on [the] strength of the Castro regime and the capacity of Cuba to finance Communist subversion in other American states.”⁷⁹

In his submission, Forsyth acknowledged that the attitude of Australia towards trade with Cuba was comparable to that of Canada. Canada did not believe its aversion to Castro’s Cuba provided justification to cut off diplomatic and trade relations. However, in respect for the US, it was unwilling to circumvent the embargo. Forsyth wrote that Australia therefore could follow Canada’s lead in terms of prohibiting the transshipment of goods of US origin, and applying the COCOM list, to Cuba. In terms of the transshipment of goods of US origin, the political disadvantages (Australia being seen to permit circumvention of the US embargo) were deemed to outweigh the few commercial advantages (handling commission) to the Australian business community.

⁷⁹ NAA: A1838, 714/3/8 Part 1, “Australian Trade with Cuba,” submission by Forsyth to [Barwick], 5 April 1962, 4.

Regarding the COCOM list, this could be justified in terms of Cuba's increasing association with the Communist bloc and the risk of strategic items being transhipped to communist states.⁸⁰ Forsyth added that Australia could unofficially apply the "China differential" and "exceptions" procedure to Cuba so that the Minister for External Affairs could examine each export application on its merits, thus providing for some flexibility in its policy. This would enable Australia to tell the US that exports to Cuba were treated in the same manner as exports to China, "and that domestic considerations would make it difficult for us to impose further restrictions on Cuba." It would also immediately impose ministerial control on Australian trade with Cuba, which could be modified at a later date "in the light of U.S. views or our own more detailed examination of Australian interests."⁸¹ Subsequently, Forsyth sought authorisation from Barwick for the Department of External Affairs to discuss with the Department of Trade the three points below "as a basis to be recommended to Cabinet for [Australia's] future trade policy with Cuba":

- (i) prohibition on the trans-shipment of goods of U.S. origin to Cuba; (ii) the application of the C.O.C.O.M. list to Cuba; [and] (iii) the unofficial application of the China 'differential' to Cuba with an 'exceptions' procedure, under which each application covering items not on the C.O.C.O.M. list would be examined on its merits.⁸²

Before Barwick could give his authorisation, discussions between the two departments were already underway. On 6 April 1962, an External Affairs official noted that he had informed Mr. Bassett of Trade of Forsyth's submission. Bassett advised that it was the "policy" of Trade Minister, McEwen, to "oppose sanctions." Bassett and Senior Deputy

⁸⁰ Ibid., 5.

⁸¹ Ibid., 5–6.

⁸² Ibid., 6.

Secretary of the Department, George Warwick Smith, “dislike[d] the use of the China differential for Cuba.”⁸³ While this discussion was not an official representation of the Minister’s views, it was an early indication of the Department’s reluctance to restrict Australia’s trade with Cuba.

The Secretary of the Department of External Affairs, Arthur Tange, also disliked the suggestion regarding the China differential. On 9 April 1962, Tange told Forsyth that while he agreed with the other suggestions regarding the transshipment of goods of US origin and the COCOM list, he was “sceptical about Parliamentary attitude to applying the ‘China differential’ to Cuba.” He continued:

China differential is based on China the unpurged aggressor? Cuba has merely confiscated property. There is no U.N. verdict against her (as in the case of China). How can unilateral trade punishment by Australia be justified?⁸⁴

Tange was reluctant to overreact to Cuba’s confiscation of property, just like Harry had been when Belton informally approached him regarding Australian-Cuban trade in February 1962. Tange’s reference to the absence of a UN verdict against Cuba also demonstrated that he was mindful of how Australian trade restrictions on Cuba would be perceived by the international community. In essence, Tange considered the application of the China differential inappropriate and unjustified.

⁸³ NAA: A1838, 714/3/8 Part 1, “Exports to Cuba,” handwritten note (author unknown) dated 6 April [1962], [External Affairs]. In the note, Warwick Smith was simply referred to by surname; his full name and position have been inserted here. See John Farquharson, “Warwick Smith, George Henry (1916–1999),” *Obituaries Australia*, National Centre of Biography, ANU, <http://oa.anu.edu.au/obituary/warwick-smith-george-henry-1003> (accessed 6 April 2016). Contrary to the obituary, he was “Senior Deputy Secretary” rather than “Deputy Secretary,” as this was a separate position: *Directory to the Office of the Governor-General, the Parliament, the Executive Government, the Judiciary, Departments and Authorities* (Canberra: Commonwealth of Australia, December 1962), 153.

⁸⁴ NAA: A1838, 714/3/8 Part 1, “Australian Trade with Cuba,” memorandum from Forsyth to [Barwick], 9 April 1962. Question mark and parentheses in original.

Two days later, Barwick approved Forsyth's recommendation for External Affairs and Trade to discuss the matter. He also provided perceptive feedback on the policy suggestions contained in the submission:

I think we shall lose no respect from America nor endanger our relations in any respect if we allow our own self-interest to manifest itself — indeed weigh heavily in any judgement we make in individual cases. This line of thought would lead me to resist item (iii) when a final decision is to be taken.⁸⁵

Barwick was also opposed to unofficially applying the China differential to Australia's trade with Cuba. His feedback suggests that he saw no value in doing so because, in judging individual cases, decisions would always be made in Australia's interests and such interests would outweigh any risk to Australia's relations with the US. Significantly, Barwick's comments demonstrate his confidence to resist US pressure—albeit informal—to conform to US policy towards Cuba, and thus independence of thought in Australian foreign and trade policy.

On 16 April 1962, Head of External Affairs' Economic Relations Branch, R. A. Peachey, wrote to the Secretary of the Department of Trade, Alan Westerman, for his Department's views on the submission.⁸⁶ McEwen had returned from his overseas tour on 27 April,⁸⁷ and yet it took over a month for Trade to respond. When it finally did, its position was consistent with that initially put forward by Bassett and Warwick Smith.

According to Director of Trade Relations, W. A. McKinnon, McEwen was of the view

⁸⁵ NAA: A1838, 714/3/8 Part 1, "Australian Trade with Cuba," submission by Forsyth to [Barwick], 5 April 1962, 1.

⁸⁶ NAA: A1838, 714/3/8 Part 1, "Australian Trade with Cuba," letter from Peachey for the Secretary, [External Affairs], to [W. A. Westerman], Secretary, Department of Trade, 16 April 1962.

⁸⁷ "Trade Minister Not Confident of Continuing Access to Markets of U.K. and Europe," *Age*, 27 April 1962, 6.

that, in addition to the prohibition on arms and warlike stores, Australia should restrict the transshipment of goods of US origin to Cuba. McKinnon emphasised, however, that this should be the only additional restriction. This was in light of the fact that the US had not formally asked Australia to restrict further its trade with Cuba, and the policies of the UK and other European states. Moreover, Australia had recently expanded its trade promotional activities to Central and South America, and thus, the Department did “not wish to see any unnecessary impediment to the development of trade in the region.” McKinnon concluded by stating that if, for political reasons, External Affairs supports applying further restrictions on Cuban trade, such as the COCOM list and China differential, then McEwen feels the matter should be submitted to Cabinet. In the interim, export of goods on the COCOM or China differential lists should be permitted.⁸⁸

By the end of May 1962, External Affairs and Trade were in agreement on a prohibition on the transshipment of goods of US origin to Cuba. However, Barwick, was now away and his Department was uncertain as to whether they could approve the existing export requests (except for the aspects related to transshipment of US goods)—subject to the China differential—on the “strength” of his comments in response to Forsyth’s submission. One External Affairs official suggested that they could inform Trade as to how they would proceed and that they “wanted the policy matter to be held over” until Barwick’s return.⁸⁹ But this turned out to be unnecessary. Mr. Bakewell from the

⁸⁸ NAA: A1838, 714/3/8 Part 1, “Australian Trade with Cuba,” letter from W. A. McKinnon, Director, Trade Relations, Department of Trade, to [Tange], 25 May 1962.

⁸⁹ NAA: A1838, 714/3/8 Part 1, handwritten note (author unknown) dated 31 May [1962], [External Affairs].

Department of Customs & Excise advised that the “heat has gone out of current requests from Australian exporters for deals with Cuba.”⁹⁰ Seemingly, too much time had passed since the business opportunities arose and the Australian exporters approached Customs & Excise, let alone their receipt of an outcome. One External Affairs official laid the blame squarely with the Trade Minister, who was also the Deputy PM and leader of the Country Party: “This is a very good case of Mr. McEwen’s numerous roles proving an embarrassment.”⁹¹

In early June 1962, External Affairs advised Customs & Excise that the Departments of External Affairs and Trade had agreed to prohibit the transshipment of goods of US origin to Cuba, but no decision had yet been made regarding the application of the COCOM list or the China differential. In the interim, Customs & Excise were advised to refer to External Affairs any applications to export Australian goods to Cuba that were within these categories. Bakewell confirmed his Department would do so and assured the External Affairs official that “Customs was completely in the hands of E.A. [External Affairs] on trade with Cuba.” It was from External Affairs that Customs & Excise “took their instructions [...] not from Trade.”⁹² Thus, trade with Cuba was not the responsibility of the Department of Trade, as one would expect, but the Department

⁹⁰ NAA: A1838, 714/3/8 Part 1, “Trade with Cuba,” memorandum to [Economic Relations Branch], External Affairs (recipient unknown), from [Americas and South Pacific Branch], External Affairs (author unknown), 8 June 1962.

⁹¹ NAA: A1838, 714/3/8 Part 1, handwritten note (author unknown) dated 31 May [1962], [External Affairs]. For more on McEwen and the positions he held, see C. J. Lloyd, “McEwen, Sir John (1900–1980),” Australian Dictionary of Biography, National Centre of Biography, ANU, <http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/mcewen-sir-john-10948> (published in hardcopy 2000, accessed online 22 April 2016).

⁹² NAA: A1838, 714/3/8 Part 1, “Trade with Cuba,” memorandum to [Economic Relations Branch], External Affairs (recipient unknown), from [Americas and South Pacific Branch], External Affairs (author unknown), 8 June 1962.

of External Affairs. This, it seemed, was due to the political implications that arose from trade with Cuba and its effect on US relations.

However, by the start of August 1962, the heat was back on exports to Cuba. The Department of Customs & Excise was once again being pressed by potential Australian exporters regarding the transshipment of goods of US origin to Cuba. In a memorandum to Barwick, Forsyth explained that Australia's position remained unchanged since April: the transshipment of goods of US origin to Cuba, which would be interpreted by the US as circumvention of its trade embargo on Cuba, "would have an unfavourable effect on Australian-United States relations and would bring Australia little commercial benefit."⁹³ On 7 August 1962, Barwick approved Forsyth's recommendations, in light of the views he and McEwen held, that Customs & Excise "take the necessary steps" to prohibit the transshipment of goods of US origin to Cuba, and that deliberation on further restrictions on Australian-Cuban trade "on the grounds that for practical purposes Cuba is a member of the Communist Bloc, should be deferred for future consideration, if necessary."⁹⁴ Two days later, Customs & Excise were instructed accordingly and informed that Trade had advised that McEwen agreed with this course of action.⁹⁵ In terms of Australia applying further restrictions, it would not do so until

⁹³ NAA: A1838, 714/3/8 Part 1, "Australian Trade with Cuba," memorandum from Forsyth to [Barwick], 2 August 1962, 1.

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, 2. In terms of "necessary steps," Customs & Excise could restrict the transshipment of such goods under the Customs (Prohibited Exports) Regulations No. 5 of 1958.

⁹⁵ NAA: A425, 1971/6758, "Australian Trade with Cuba," letter from Peachey for the Secretary, External Affairs, to [Rattigan], Comptroller-General, Department of Customs & Excise, 9 August 1962. A copy of this letter can be found in: NAA: A1838, 714/3/8 Part 1, "Strategic Exports—Controls Policy towards Cuba."

October 1964 when the new Minister for External Affairs, Paul Hasluck, brought Australia's trade with Cuba to Cabinet for it to formally determine policy.⁹⁶

On 12 September 1962, Customs & Excise questioned External Affairs on the application of the decision on transshipment to the entirety of a consignment. That is, where a consignment consisted of goods of US origin and goods of Australian origin, whether the prohibition applied to the latter—in this case, the export to Cuba of Australian railway equipment and agricultural tractors and parts. H. A. Forbes, First Assistant Comptroller-General (General), also sought confirmation that the decision applied to the transshipment of goods of US origin via Australia to Cuba, even if those goods were not imported for transshipment.⁹⁷ Harry sent Barwick a memorandum on the subject on 19 October 1962. Harry stated that a determination on the transshipment of goods not originally imported for transshipment “would involve a possibly difficult decision turning on motive.” The result, nevertheless, would be circumvention of the US trade embargo on Cuba, which could damage Australia-US relations. He recommended including this example within the prohibition, which, he noted, did not restrict the export of goods of Australian origin.⁹⁸ Barwick concurred. He gave his opinion on 23 October 1962, the same day that news of the Cuban Crisis broke in

⁹⁶ NAA: A1838, 838/1 Part 1, “Australian Trade with Cuba,” Cabinet submission no. 48, submitted by Paul Hasluck, Minister for External Affairs, 1 October 1964. A copy of this submission can be found in: NAA: A1838, 714/3/8 Part 1, “Strategic Exports—Controls Policy towards Cuba.”

⁹⁷ NAA: A425, 1971/6758, “Australian Trade with Cuba,” letter from Forbes to [Tange], 12 September 1962. A copy of this letter can be found in: NAA: A1838, 714/3/8 Part 1, “Strategic Exports—Controls Policy towards Cuba.”

⁹⁸ NAA: A1838, 714/3/8 Part 1, “Australian Trade with Cuba,” memorandum from Harry to [Barwick], 19 October 1962.

Australia.⁹⁹ It is also noteworthy that on that date, Peachey provided Tange and the senior officials in External Affairs with a summary of the measures considered and decisions taken with respect to Australian-Cuban trade since the US imposed a trade embargo on Cuba in February 1962. His memorandum also appears to have been sent that day to the Minister's office.¹⁰⁰ Its timing, and the fact that it simply contains background information, suggests that it was produced for that purpose. Interestingly, it was not the subject of any discussion.

On 25 October 1962, and thus in the midst of the Cuban Crisis, Peachey sent a letter clarifying Barwick's decision to Rattigan. First, Peachey explained that Barwick had determined that the prohibition on the transshipment of goods of US origin via Australia to Cuba was "absolute" and thus not limited to goods intended only for transshipment from their Australian entry point nor goods immediately transhipped.¹⁰¹ Second, Peachey stated that apart from the restrictions contained in the Customs (Prohibited Exports) Regulations No. 5 of 1958, there were no prohibitions or controls on the export to Cuba of goods of Australian origin.¹⁰²

⁹⁹ Ibid. with handwritten annotation from Barwick, 23 October [1962]. His note, which had been typed and affixed to the bottom of the memorandum due to the illegibility of the handwriting, was initialled "G. E. B. 23.10" [Garfield Edward Barwick, 23 October 1962].

¹⁰⁰ NAA: A1838, 714/3/8 Part 1, "Cuba: Strategic Controls," memorandum from Peachey with handwritten annotation "returned from Minister's office," to [Tange] and Messrs Harry, Waller, Forsyth, Kelly, Truscott, Dunn, External Affairs, 23 October 1962.

¹⁰¹ NAA: A425, 1971/6758, "Australian Trade with Cuba," letter from Peachey for [Tange] to [Rattigan], 25 October 1962. A copy of this letter can be found in: NAA: A1838, 714/3/8 Part 1, "Strategic Exports—Controls Policy towards Cuba."

¹⁰² NAA: A425, 1971/6758, "Australian Trade with Cuba," letter from Peachey to [Rattigan], 25 October 1962. Subsequently, Customs & Excise clarified to The Collector in each state the Government's policy on exports to Cuba: NAA: A425, 1971/6758, "Exportation of Goods to Cuba," memorandum from Rattigan to The Collector (New South Wales, Victoria, Queensland, South Australia, Western Australia, Tasmania), 29 October 1962.

The timing of the clarification was not lost on one Customs & Excise official when writing about Australian-Cuban trade in 1964. Rather than reflecting on the decision, which had been under discussion since March 1962, the official simply referred to these “arrangements which were formulated at the time of the Cuban crisis in 1962.”¹⁰³ This comment, however, is misleading. The “arrangements” were clarified rather than formulated in October. More significantly, the official implied that the two issues were connected when in fact, they were treated as entirely separate matters.

The Kennedy Administration did not want goods of US origin in Cuba and the Department of External Affairs was willing to facilitate this by prohibiting the transshipment of such goods via Australia. However, it is clear that External Affairs had no interest in prohibiting the export of Australian goods to Cuba, a point it clarified at the height of the Cuban Crisis. The significance of this, given the political situation, should not be overlooked: Australia continued to maintain trade relations with Cuba, who was involved in a nuclear standoff with the US, Australia’s most important ally. Thus, although the Menzies Government was antagonistic to Fidel Castro’s political views, it was happy to see Australian-Cuban trade endure, and continue to treat politics and economics as separate issues.

Australia was not alone. Canada also maintained trade relations with Cuba at this time and vowed to continue to do so despite the crisis. The Canadian Minister of Trade and

¹⁰³ NAA: A425, 1971/6758, minute paper, Moore to [Kenneth Anderson], Minister for Customs & Excise, 8 October 1964, 1.

Commerce, George H. Hees, was asked in Parliament on 24 October 1962 whether “In view of the present international situation, has the government changed its policy with regard to trade with Cuba?” Hees replied “that policy remains the same.”¹⁰⁴ The decision of the Australian Government not to impose further trade restrictions on Cuba, and to continue trading with it, just like Canada, was also significant because, immediately before the crisis, the Kennedy Administration had made trade with the Caribbean island all the more difficult for its allies.

At the beginning of October 1962, the Kennedy Administration announced that it was proposing to impose restrictions on the shipment of goods to Cuba.¹⁰⁵ The Australian Embassy, Washington, confirmed this move on 5 October 1962.¹⁰⁶ The restrictions, which had the potential to significantly affect Australian-Cuban trade, would: close US ports to all shipping of states that had any vessels carrying arms to Cuba; deny US government cargoes to the foreign flag ships of owners whose vessels were employed in trade with Cuba or the Soviet bloc; prohibit American-owned vessels from shipping goods to Cuba; and close US ports to any ship that, on a continuous voyage, was employed in trade between the Soviet bloc and Cuba.¹⁰⁷ The restrictions compounded

¹⁰⁴ “Trade: Cuba—Inquiry as to Change of Policy,” Canada, House of Commons, *Debates*, 25th Parliament, 1st session, vol. 1, 24 October 1962, 888, on *Canadian Parliamentary Historical Resources*, http://parl.canadiana.ca/view/oop.debates_HOC2501_01/882?r=0&s=1 (accessed 7 April 2016).

¹⁰⁵ NAA: A1838, 714/3/8 Part 1, “Cuba,” inward cablegram (I.24450), Australian High Commission, London to External Affairs, 4 October 1962.

¹⁰⁶ NAA: A1838, 714/3/8 Part 1, “Cuba,” inward savingram (I.24685), Washington Embassy to External Affairs, 5 October 1962.

¹⁰⁷ NAA: A1838, 838/1 Part 1, “U.S.A.: Restrictions on Shipping to Cuba,” memorandum by Peachey for Harry, 23 October 1962. According to William C. Burdett, US Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for European Affairs, “Soviet bloc” included China but excluded Yugoslavia: NAA: A1838, 714/3/8 Part 1, “Cuba,” inward cablegram (I.24450), Australian High Commission, London to External Affairs, 4 October 1962. The cablegram simply included Burdett’s surname and a partial reference to his position; the full details have been inserted here. See: “Foreign Relations, Organization of Foreign Policy; Information Policy; United Nations; Scientific Matters; Persons,” U.S. Department of State Archive, <http://2001-2009.state.gov/r/pa/ho/frus/kennedyjyf/xxv/6030.htm> (accessed 7 April 2016).

what was, as previously noted, a comprehensive embargo. Their purpose was to increase shipping costs associated with trade between the Soviet Bloc and Cuba by preventing vessels that delivered goods to Cuba from collecting US cargoes for shipment to Europe, leaving them “to return across the Atlantic empty.”¹⁰⁸ The restrictions would prove successful: in October, 65 “free world” ships called at Cuban ports; by January 1963, the number had dropped to 14.¹⁰⁹

The UK had concerns about the effect of the restrictions.¹¹⁰ Like Australia and Canada, the UK was not ready to place an embargo on Cuba, which the British Board of Trade was earlier reported as considering “too much like economic warfare.”¹¹¹ Such measures simply did not align with British PM Harold Macmillan’s global vision of “interdependence.” In the words of the editor of Macmillan’s diaries, Peter Catterall, the PM thought that

giving poorer countries access to world markets and raising their productivity, would also benefit the richer, both in terms of trade and security, not least by reducing the attraction of communism to those sections of the globe then heading to independence.¹¹²

¹⁰⁸ NAA: A1838, 714/3/8 Part 1, “Cuba,” inward savingram (I.24638), Washington Embassy to External Affairs, 4 October 1962.

¹⁰⁹ Of the 14 free world ships docking at Cuban ports in January 1963, the US Maritime Administration identified five from the UK, and the rest from Greece, Italy, Japan, Lebanon, Panama, and Sweden: NAA: A1838, 838/1 Part 1, “U.S. Restrictions on Cuba-bound Shipping,” extract from Keesing’s Contemporary Archives, 9–16 February 1963. Keesing’s is an independent world news archive.

¹¹⁰ See, for example, NAA: 714/3/8 Part 1, “Cuba,” inward cablegram (I.24501), Australian High Commission, London to External Affairs, 4 October 1962.

¹¹¹ NAA: A1838, 838/1 Part 1, inward cablegram (I.7056), “Exports to Cuba,” Australian High Commission, London to External Affairs, 23 March 1962, 1. A copy of this cablegram can be found in: NAA: A1838, 714/3/8 Part 1, “Strategic Exports—Controls Policy towards Cuba.”

¹¹² Harold Macmillan, *The Macmillan Diaries: Prime Minister and After, 1957–66*, Peter Catterall, ed. (London: Macmillan, 2011), xxxi.

The US embargo on Cuba had the opposite effect. It reduced the Caribbean island's access to international markets and left it little choice but to pursue closer relations with the Soviet Union. Additionally, the US restrictions posed major problems for British shipping. The Foreign Office, which well-understood the "intensity of United States feeling on this subject,"¹¹³ was "anxious to demonstrate a willingness to co-operate." However, as Anthony D. Parsons, Assistant Head of the American Department from 1961–64, emphasised to the Australian High Commission, London, in October 1962, "in respect of Cuba as of communist China, United States and United Kingdom views are poles apart."¹¹⁴ The Foreign Office was aware that, in terms of the British position, the "United States are simply not impressed."¹¹⁵ But Macmillan also felt that the US did not appreciate the British position. He wrote in his diary on 3 October 1962 that President Kennedy was "angry with us for not being willing to join in a boycott or blockade." Macmillan continued:

He is either unwilling or unable to understand that we cannot give orders to British shipping, esp. [especially] ships on charter, to avoid going to Cuba without legislation. (In war, of course, it's different. But we are not at war with Cuba)[.] Nor does he realise the violence of the feeling of British shipowners against American government and their discrimination, subsidies and other methods of injuring British shipping.¹¹⁶

Essentially, the British Government was not able to direct (legally) British shipping nor did it wish to feel the wrath of British shipowners. In the days and weeks before the

¹¹³ NAA: A1838, 838/1 Part 1, inward cablegram (I.7056), "Exports to Cuba," Australian High Commission to External Affairs, 23 March 1962, 2.

¹¹⁴ NAA: 714/3/8 Part 1, "Cuba," inward cablegram (I.24501), Australian High Commission, London to External Affairs, 4 October 1962. In the cablegram, Parsons was simply referred to by surname; his full name and position have been inserted here. See Sir Anthony (Derrick) Parsons interviewed by Jane Bader, "British Diplomatic Oral History Project," Devon, UK, 22 March 1996, DOHP 10 (transcript), British Diplomatic Oral History Programme, Churchill College, University of Cambridge, https://www.chu.cam.ac.uk/media/uploads/files/Parsons_Anthony.pdf (accessed 7 April 2016), 4–7.

¹¹⁵ NAA: 714/3/8 Part 1, "Cuba," inward cablegram (I.24501), Australian High Commission, London to External Affairs, 4 October 1962.

¹¹⁶ Macmillan, *The Macmillan Diaries*, 502 (3 October 1962). Emphasis and parentheses in original.

Cuban Crisis, according to Guto Thomas “the crescendo of disquiet reached new heights;” clearly, trade measures towards Cuba were “an irritant” in Anglo-American relations.”¹¹⁷

Anglo-American differences, however, were temporarily set aside during the Cuban Crisis. Thomas argued that

when the problem or crisis being confronted was of a truly military or strategic nature, as opposed to economic or mercantile, the ‘special’ parts of the ‘special relationship’ eclipsed the underlying tensions over trade and shipping.¹¹⁸

In other words, as a result of the nuclear crisis, some aspects of the Anglo-American relationship “eclipsed” such hostility over trade and shipping policies. Here, Thomas referred to Anglo-American cooperation in intelligence. During the crisis, “The British Embassy in Havana was America’s eyes and ears in Cuba, with diplomats engaged in gathering information for the consumption of the US intelligence community.”¹¹⁹ However, Thomas’ use of the term eclipse should be emphasised; “an eclipse,” he noted, “by definition, is short-lived.”¹²⁰ Once the crisis ended, there were signs that Anglo-American cooperation over Cuba demonstrated during the crisis, was also likely to end. The Foreign Office’s American Department determined that a continuation of the tough US policy stance towards Cuba would “raise problems for our shipping and

¹¹⁷ Thomas, “Trade and Shipping to Cuba 1961–1963,” 125.

¹¹⁸ Ibid., 126.

¹¹⁹ Ibid., 171 and 133–6.

¹²⁰ Ibid., 126.

for our commercial and political relations with both Cuba and the United States.”¹²¹ By all indications, such policies would continue, and would result in further friction with British policies.¹²² Thus, the “tensions—suppressed and eclipsed for such a short time by the greater threat of missiles in Cuba—now re-emerged as an irritant in relations.”¹²³

Although Australian-American relations were not strained to the same degree, this was also true for Australia. The Cuban Crisis suppressed and eclipsed complete consideration of Australia’s trade with Cuba and its effect on the US alliance. Significantly, Australian officials did not contemplate the US quarantine of Cuba in the context of existing US trade and shipping restrictions on Cuba; their focus was on its legality. Also, friction between Australia and the US was not quick to re-emerge, as in the British case, but it would nevertheless resurface 12 months after the crisis—and much worse than before—when the Menzies Government felt President Kennedy’s wrath over a large shipment of Australian wheat to Cuba.¹²⁴

The Department of Trade believed only one Australian company could be directly affected by the shipping restrictions announced at the beginning of October 1962. That was Rigryth, which operated one small ship for exporting cattle and sheep to Central

¹²¹ “[Nicholas J. A.] Cheetham [Assistant Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs (Consular, American and Central Europe)] to [Harold] Caccia, [Permanent Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs,] ‘Cuba’, Secret, October 30 1962. (AK 1261/412) FO 371/162395,” as quoted in *ibid.*, 170. For the diplomats’ first names and positions, which have been inserted here, see “A Directory of British Diplomats,” updated 8 March 2016, <http://www.gulabin.com/britishdiplomatsdirectory/pdf/britishdiplomatsdirectory.pdf> (accessed 13 March 2016), 95 and 81 respectively.

¹²² Thomas, “Trade and Shipping to Cuba 1961–1963,” 170.

¹²³ *Ibid.*, 173.

¹²⁴ See NAA: A1838, 838/1 Part 1, “Cuba – Economic relations with Australia.”

and South America. In informing the Department of External Affairs of the potential effect of the restrictions, Trade proposed that it would simply advise Rigryth privately of the US decision, and “publish the text of the eventual U.S. announcement imposing the restrictions in ‘Overseas Trading’ as a general warning to exporters.”¹²⁵

One External Affairs official was apprehensive about Trade’s decision simply to publish the announcement of the restrictions. In a note to Forsyth, which was forwarded to Peachey, the official wrote:

I presume that publication of the U.S. announcement in Overseas Trading by Trade would not imply that the Australian Government had agreed that the measures were appropriate. If it carried such an implication we would need further authority before agreeing.

We should keep in close touch with Washington about when the eventual announcement will be made. It is likely to spark questions about our political attitude to Cuba. I suggest that replies should be along the line that developments in Cuba pose serious problems for the U.S. and Latin America in general. In our view they are primarily problems for countries in the region, to be handled by regional machinery.¹²⁶

It is clear that this official did not wish to indicate that the Australian Government believed that the US trade restrictions on Cuba were appropriate. Within External Affairs, there was opposition to the US trade restrictions on Cuba and concern that Trade’s actions could be misconstrued as an endorsement of the US restrictions, without the proper authority of either the Minister or Cabinet. Additionally, regarding the Australian Government’s political attitude towards Cuba, the official suggested that Australia take the view that the developments in Cuba posed problems for the US and

¹²⁵ NAA: A1838, 838/1 Part 1, “Trade with Cuba,” memorandum by Peachey for Harry, 16 October 1962.

¹²⁶ NAA: A1838, 838/1 Part 1, handwritten note by “H. D.” (author unknown), Americas and South Pacific Branch, External Affairs, for Forsyth, 18 October 1962. Emphasis in original.

Latin America and should be managed by regional machinery. Less than a week later during the Cuban Crisis, the Australian Government adopted this *exact* position. In his parliamentary statement on the crisis, Menzies, as noted in Chapter 1, stated that “the Americas are therefore being submitted to a very grave threat at close quarters.” Also, he expressed his appreciation for Kennedy’s reference to “regional defensive agreements”—in other words, the Rio Treaty and OAS—which were essential for “the common safety” of those in the Americas.¹²⁷ Essentially, the Australian Government saw Cuba as primarily a problem for the US and Latin America, both in terms of trade and the Cuban Crisis. However, as this thesis argues, each issue required careful management of the US alliance.

Although the US restrictions might only have affected one Australian company, they had the potential to significantly affect Australian-Cuban trade, which was already very small. It is likely that it was Rigryth that exported the cattle to Cuba in 1961–62, which was the export item, as stated earlier, that saw the total value of Australia’s exports to the island go from nil in 1960–61 to £37,000.00 in 1961–62. This was a great increase given that the aggregate total value of exports for the years 1952–60 was only £23,000.00 (see Table 1). Thus, by imposing such sweeping restrictions on the shipment of goods to Cuba, the US was effectively interfering in Australian-Cuban trade. As the total value of exports to Cuba returned to £1,000.00 in 1962–63, it is difficult to tell whether this was because the cattle exports in the previous financial year were an anomaly or because of the effects of the US restrictions. What is clear, however, is that

¹²⁷ R.G. Menzies, “International Affairs: Ministerial Statement,” *Commonwealth Parliamentary Debates* (CPD), House of Representatives (House), vol. 37, 23 October 1962, 1781.

Australian-Cuban trade continued irrespective of both the US embargo on Cuba, and importantly, the Cuban Crisis.

Given the Australian Government's ability both to express antipathy for Castro's Cuba and to maintain trade relations, this situation may not seem overly surprising. As was noted in Chapter 2 and should be recalled here, Australia saw the crisis as predominantly a US-Soviet dispute. In other words, Cuba is largely absent from Australia's Cuban Crisis experience. The Australian Government saw the Soviet Union as responsible for the crisis. In the Cabinet deliberations and Menzies' parliamentary statement, references are made to the deceitful activities of the Soviets; the Cubans do not rate a mention. Thus, the diminished role and responsibility the Australian Government allocated to Cuba could explain its willingness to continue to pursue its geo-economic interests during what it considered to be a regional crisis for the US and its neighbours. Nevertheless, the fact that these shipping restrictions were proposed at the start of October 1962 and their potential effects were being deliberated by departmental officials on 16 and 23 October 1962¹²⁸— thus, during the Cuban Crisis— makes McEwen's response to the PM in Cabinet regarding Australian-Cuban trade, all the more remarkable.

As Minister for Trade, McEwen should have been aware of Australia's history of trade with the Caribbean island. As shown in Table 1, the previous financial year had been

¹²⁸ NAA: A1838, 838/1 Part 1, "Trade with Cuba," memorandum by Peachey for Harry, 16 October 1962; and *ibid.*, "U.S.A.: Restrictions on Shipping to Cuba," memorandum by Peachey for Harry, 23 October 1962.

Australia's best since 1952 in terms of the highest total value of exports to Cuba. It was also clear from the discussions with the Department of External Affairs that there was no desire to restrict Australian-Cuban trade. McEwen's response to Menzies, therefore, was incorrect and misleading. If McEwen was indeed unaware of Australian-Cuban trade, then he was completely out of touch with the day-to-day business of his Department. It suggests that his contribution to the preceding discussion on export licences and Australian trade restrictions towards Cuba—which unfolded just months prior to the Cuban Crisis—was perfunctory rather than meaningful, and that it was Trade officials, rather than the Minister, with whom Barwick and the External Affairs officials *actually* engaged. This was, as one official suggested, possibly the result of McEwen occupying too many roles. Even if McEwen's response was intended to reflect an honest belief that Australia did not at that time have any exports en route to Cuba, his answer nevertheless implied the absence of trade between the two states, and with that, there was no discussion on trade. Consequently, the Cabinet was not given any sense of the challenges associated with trade with Cuba, such as its potential effect on the Australia-US alliance. Whether the US, as a result of the nuclear crisis, would further pressure allies to cease trading with Cuba and how Australia would juggle its geo-strategic and geo-economic interests, for example, were issues that simply were not taken into consideration.

It is also clear from the preceding discussion that, given the political issues involved (and, specifically, US sensitivity over Cuba), External Affairs, not Trade, was given the responsibility for managing Australian-Cuban trade. While the Trade Minister should

have been able to respond with accuracy to the PM's question, curiously, the External Affairs Minister, who was clearly aware of Australian-Cuban trade, did not correct him nor offer more information. It is possible that Barwick did not intervene in order to avoid embarrassing McEwen. More likely, however, he simply did not consider the issue relevant in terms of the Government's policy on the crisis nor one that needed to be brought before Cabinet. Barwick was confident in the way he and External Affairs were handling Australian-Cuban trade, including any pressure or disapproval from the US. Also, Barwick and McEwen had agreed months earlier that Cabinet's views would not yet be sought on Australian-Cuban trade.

While McEwen and Barwick did not discuss Australian-Cuban trade with Cabinet, it should be noted that no records have been located in which the subject was raised by officials in the Departments of External Affairs and Trade, either with each other or their respective Ministers. It is possible, therefore, that the ministers' oversight followed that of their staff, who apparently had not thought to brief them on the subject before or after the Cabinet meeting. This is despite, for example, External Affairs officials contemplating the potential effect that US restrictions on shipping to Cuba could have on Australian trade, just weeks before news of the crisis broke. Regardless, the fact that Australian-Cuban trade was mishandled by McEwen and not handled at all by Barwick and External Affairs during the crisis is astonishing given the deliberations on the subject throughout 1962. Moreover, that an issue as significant as Australia-US differences over trade with Cuba failed to enter into the minds of policymakers during the Cuban Crisis is extraordinary.

Bittersweet: Soaring Sugar Exports Amid Concerns over US Shipping Restrictions

For the Australian sugar industry, the US embargo on Cuba was bittersweet. Australia, as this section shows, was able to export an increasing amount of sugar, including to the US, as a result of the latter's embargo on Cuba. However, US shipping restrictions introduced in October 1962 had the potential to interfere with Australian sugar shipments. Thus, the US embargo on Cuba not only complicated Australia's trade with the Caribbean island, but also posed problems for Australia's trade with the US.

The US, as a result of cutting Cuban sugar imports from late 1960 and imposing a full trade embargo on Cuba, began to look for alternative exporters of sugar. Australia, the world's fourth largest producer of cane sugar, was an obvious consideration.¹²⁹ While Australia did not benefit immediately from the fallout between the US and Cuba in this regard,¹³⁰ the US ordered Australian sugar in 1961 to replace some of what Cuba previously supplied. That year, Australia also exported sugar to Canada, Hong Kong, Japan, New Zealand, and the UK—which was essentially the only European importer of Australian sugar.¹³¹ At the beginning of 1962, Cuba withdrew its sugar from the world market. At that time, world supply of sugar far outweighed demand.¹³² However, the US

¹²⁹ NARA: RG 59, General Records of the Department of State, CDF, 1960–63, from 843.00/1-460 to 843.0051K/1-362, box 2495, file 843.00/1-562, “Queensland—A Current Economic Survey” (unclassified section), from Knox Lamb, American Consul, American Consulate, Brisbane, to Department of State, 11 April 1962, 4.

¹³⁰ NARA: RG 59, General Records of the Department of State, CDF, 1960–63, from 843.00/1-460 to 843.0051K/1-362, box 2495, file 843.00/1-460, “Quarterly Economic Summary—Australia: April–June 1960” (unclassified) prepared by William E. Knight II, First Secretary of Embassy, for the Ambassador [to Australia, Sebald], and forwarded by American Embassy to Department of State, 4 August 1960, 5.

¹³¹ NARA: RG 59, General Records of the Department of State, CDF, 1960–63, from 843.00/1-460 to 843.0051K/1-362, box 2495, file 843.00/1-562, “Queensland—A Current Economic Survey” (unclassified section), from Lamb to Department of State, 11 April 1962, 4.

¹³² “No Cuban Sugar For Export: London Prices Up £2 A Ton,” *Financial Times* (London), 1 February 1962, 1.

did not believe Australia would have any difficulties offloading its “record exportable surplus” of sugar that year. In an economic report for the period July to September 1962, US Ambassador to Australia, William C. Battle, was told that “The favorable [*sic*] selling position results from the Cuban situation which has stimulated large purchases of Australian sugar by the U.S., Japan, Korea and other markets.”¹³³

Australia, therefore, was expected to profit from the breakdown in relations between the US and Cuba. It was estimated that Australia would earn £47 million (Australian) in export income from sugar in 1962–63, which would reflect a gain of £13 million (Australian) compared to the previous season, Australia having produced a record 1.8 million tonnes. Again, the US Embassy attributed Australia’s anticipated position to increased purchases of Australian sugar by the US and other former importers of Cuban sugar.¹³⁴ As predicted, Australia exported over a million tonnes of raw sugar in 1962.¹³⁵

Although the Department of Trade considered that only Rigryth might be affected by the US shipping restrictions introduced in October 1962, the Colonial Sugar Refining Company (CSR), a leading supplier in the Australian sugar industry, advised the Government that it was “worried” about the effect these restrictions could have on trade

¹³³ NARA: RG 59, General Records of the Department of State, CDF, 1960–63, from 843.00/1-460 to 843.0051K/1-362, box 2495, file 843.00/8-362, “Quarterly Economic Summary” (unclassified) prepared by Schodt for [William C. Battle], Ambassador [to Australia], and forwarded by American Embassy to Department of State, 6 November 1962, 9.

¹³⁴ NARA: RG 59, General Records of the Department of State, CDF, 1960–63, from 843.00/1-460 to 843.0051K/1-362, box 2495, file 843.00/1-562, “Biweekly Economic Review No. 1 for the Period Ended January 3, 1962” (unclassified) prepared by Donald W. Lamm, First Secretary of Embassy, for Ambassador [to Australia], and forwarded by American Embassy to Department of State, 7 January 1962, 3.

¹³⁵ “Historical Events: Key Dates in the History of the Australian Sugar Industry,” Australian Cane Farmers Association, <http://www.acfa.com.au/sugar-industry/historical-events/> (accessed 13 April 2016).

with the US.¹³⁶ By the mid-1960s, CSR, which largely controlled the industry, was one of the world's top one hundred companies and one of Australia's only large Australian-owned companies.¹³⁷ It was also the sole export agent of the Queensland Sugar Corporation, and up to 1992, had been the only Australian company awarded an eligibility certificate from the US Embassy to export the sugar quota allocated to Australia by the US.¹³⁸ Thus, CSR was particularly "concerned about its arrangements for chartering vessels for sugar shipments to the United States." As a result, the Department of External Affairs sought further information from Washington in order to assess more accurately the effect of the proposed restrictions.¹³⁹ The restrictions would likely have been a concern for the Australian Government given the importance of this commodity to the Australian economy, and particularly in light of the recent increase in exports. Australian public intellectual, Donald Horne, offered a frank explanation as to why the Government would have been troubled by the restrictions: "Favourable treatment of the sugar industry is built into Australian politics because so much employment in Queensland depends on it and because, like other export industries, it helps the balance of payments."¹⁴⁰

The interest of the UK in joining the Common Market also had the potential to sour what had otherwise been sweet success for the Australian sugar industry. In an

¹³⁶ NAA: A1838, 838/1 Part 1, "CSR," handwritten file note (author and date unknown).

¹³⁷ Donald Horne, *The Lucky Country* (Ringwood, Victoria: Penguin Books, 1971 (3rd rev. ed.)), 181.

¹³⁸ Industry Commission, "The Australian Sugar Industry," report no. 19 (Canberra: Australian Government Publishing Service, 6 March 1992), <http://www.pc.gov.au/inquiries/completed/sugar/19sugar.pdf> (accessed 17 April 2016), 88 and 96.

¹³⁹ NAA: A1838, 838/1 Part 1, "U.S.A.: Restrictions on Shipping to Cuba," memorandum by Peachey for Harry, 23 October 1962.

¹⁴⁰ Horne, *The Lucky Country*, 181.

economic review sent to the US State Department, Battle acknowledged that Australian sugar exports would be adversely affected by UK entry into the Common Market.¹⁴¹ Thus, while markets for Australian sugar were expanding, these same markets, and those of other commodities, were also considered under threat.

Yet none of this was discussed by Cabinet, External Affairs or Trade officials during the Cuban Crisis. The crisis made it abundantly clear that relations between the US and Cuba were under further strain and highly unlikely to improve in the short-term. This would have indicated that the US would continue to import sugar from alternative sources, such as Australia, which would have had consequences for the Australian sugar industry, and thus, the Australian economy. Given the time Australian officials spent examining the political effects of Australian trade with Cuba prior to the crisis and the focus on the Australian export drive, it is surprising that the likelihood of ongoing hostility between the US and Cuba and the implications of this on trade, were not contemplated.

This chapter has shown that Australia maintained a trade relationship with Cuba despite McEwen's claims to the contrary. Trade with Cuba had become an irritant in relations between the US and several of its allies but, in the lead up to the Cuban Crisis, Australia had come under less criticism than Canada and the UK. Nevertheless, the Australian

¹⁴¹ NARA: RG 59, General Records of the Department of State, CDF, 1960–63, from 843.00/1-460 to 843.0051K/1-362, box 2495, file 843.00/1-562, "Biweekly Economic Review No. 15 for the Period Ended July 19, 1962" prepared by Battle, and forwarded by American Embassy to Department of State, 20 July 1962, 6.

Government was mindful of US sensitivity on the subject and took its highly restrictive trade and shipping measures towards Cuba into serious consideration in its deliberations regarding Australia's export trade with Cuba and the US, particularly throughout February to October 1962. Essentially, the Australian Government was determined not to let the US embargo on Cuba inhibit its trade with the island. However, the Government also benefited from the US embargo on Cuba in that it opened-up new markets to the Australian sugar industry. Clearly, the Government was doing its utmost to maintain and further Australia's economic interests. However, Australian policymakers, remarkably, did not consider Australia's trade relations with Cuba or the US during the Cuban Crisis. The fact that they did not do so illustrates that, on this particular occasion, geo-economic security was not a foreign policy concern. However, given that the issue was raised in Cabinet, albeit swiftly dismissed, demonstrates that it remained an important factor in Australian foreign policy decision-making. Australian trade with Cuba required careful management of the US alliance; the Menzies Government was able to do both in furtherance of Australia's geo-economic and geo-strategic interests. According to Lee, Australian foreign policy decisions in the immediate post-war period reflected a search for security that was "both an attempt to promote Australia's national economic well-being in the new multilateral economic world order and an attempt to assure Australia's security in the politico-strategic sense in the Cold War."¹⁴² The findings of this thesis demonstrate that attempts to manage geo-economic and geo-strategic interests continued beyond the first years of Australia's Cold War. The next chapter shows how the Government managed Australia's interests in practice through its implementation of Australia's policy on the Cuban Crisis.

¹⁴² Lee, *Search for Security*, 6.

Initial Implementation of Australia's Policy on the Crisis at Home and Abroad

International relations scholar Christopher Hubbard claimed that “Australia’s geography and security alliances have, to some extent, placed it on the periphery of world events.” As a stable democracy, middle power, and enduring ally of the US in the Pacific, “Australia, despite its relatively modest size and military potential, has often regarded itself as able to influence events within its own region.” However, on the global stage, Hubbard asserted, Australia has generally considered itself “economically, politically and diplomatically small enough to be able to run its own race.” Simultaneously, other states have regarded Australia “as sufficiently important to matter in the councils of the northern democracies.”¹ Whereas Chapters 2 to 5 focused on Cabinet’s formulation of its policy on the crisis and the factors that influenced it, this chapter centres on the influence of the Menzies Government’s policy at home and abroad. It begins by examining local and then foreign reactions to the Government’s policy in order to determine its effect during, and in the immediate aftermath of, the most intense period of the crisis.

Earlier chapters have shown that the Cabinet and bureaucrats in Canberra were more concerned about maintaining Australian security during the crisis by successfully managing the US alliance than they were with its *nuclear* nature. While there is little

¹ Christopher Hubbard, “From Ambivalence to Influence: Australia and the Negotiation of the 1968 Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty,” *Australian Journal of Politics and History* 50, no. 4 (2004): 527.

evidence to suggest that during the crisis Australians prepared for nuclear conflict, this chapter demonstrates that the Cuban situation prompted some Australians to question the adequacy of the nation's security and its preparedness for nuclear war. It shows how such concerns were reflected in public reactions to the Government's new defence programme, launched in the middle of the crisis, as well as post-crisis questions in newspapers and journals over civil defence measures, specifically, emergency health plans and bunkers. Further, this chapter argues that Australians concerned about Australia's security and civil defence measures had little influence on the Menzies Government's policy on the crisis.

Australian officials in Canberra were conscious of the potential for the crisis to start a global, thermonuclear war. However, the Government only acknowledged this possibility in its second public statement on the crisis, a statement that it delivered *after* the most intense period of the crisis had passed. Throughout the crisis, Australian officials located at the UN in New York perceived the nuclear threat differently from those in Canberra. That is, the Australian UN delegation was, because of its proximity to Cuba, acutely aware of the nuclear threat the crisis posed. However, this thesis contends that Australian officials in both Canberra and New York were naive in their understanding of *thermonuclear* weapons because they mistakenly emphasised geographical isolation over the broad-reaching impact of such weapons.

Although the Cabinet in Canberra saw Australia on the periphery during the Cuban Crisis—a security issue facing the US and its region that was beyond Australia’s sphere of influence—this chapter demonstrates that, on the world stage of the UN in New York, the Australian delegation sought to influence Member States *outside* its region to support the US resolution in the Security Council, and that it was successful in doing so. Australia did not exactly “run its own race,” to use Hubbard’s phrase, in that it did not advocate its *private* views regarding the US position on the crisis, which have been outlined throughout this thesis. Nevertheless, the Government urged support for the Kennedy Administration in an effort to manage and maintain its alliance. The Australian delegation, especially Permanent Representative to the UN, James Plimsoll, worked hard to garner support for the US resolution among Member States (in anticipation of a General Assembly vote) and influenced representatives of other democracies who sought his counsel on the crisis.

The chapter commences with an overview of the Menzies Government’s new defence programme, Australian public reactions to it, and its nexus with the Cuban Crisis. This is followed by an examination of the concerns of some Australians regarding the nation’s *preparedness* for nuclear war and nuclear war itself. The Government’s second public statement on the crisis is then considered in detail, as are the views of the Australian delegation to the UN in New York on the nuclear threat posed by the crisis. This provides significant insight into Australian understandings of thermonuclear weapons. The chapter concludes with a discussion of the interactions that the Australian delegation to the UN in New York had with other Member States during the crisis and

an analysis of the influence it was able to exercise in favour of the US resolution before the Security Council.

Australia's New Defence Programme

On 23 October 1962, events in Federal Parliament were “overshadowed” by the Cuban Crisis.² This shifted slightly on 24 October 1962 when Minister for Defence, Athol Townley, announced in Parliament the Menzies Government’s new three-year defence programme. It was estimated to cost £650 million that, compared to the last programme, included what Townley described as a “substantial” increase of £30 million. This “significant expansion of defence spending,” he stated, “is essential in the present state of international affairs, which demands a policy of unceasing and effective defence preparedness.” The new programme saw, for example, an increase in Army personnel by 3,500, the purchase of 30 Mirage jet fighter aircraft, and funding allocated for Bell HUIB Iroquois and heavy-lift helicopters, transport aircraft, landing craft, and weapons. There were no major developments for the Navy, which was already undergoing modernisation initiated under the previous plan.³ Major daily newspapers, including the *Advertiser* and the *Examiner*, reported that Townley had emphasised that the defence programme was not static and that “The Government will keep the situation under constant review, and will not hesitate to make any adjustments that might be desirable in the light of developments.” The Defence Minister had also noted that events in Cuba

² “Canberra Commentary: Prime Minister’s Better Appreciation Of U.N.,” *Sydney Morning Herald*, 30 October 1962, 2.

³ CPD, House, vol. 37, 24 October 1962, 1877–85. See also “£650m. Plan for Defence,” *Advertiser*, 25 October 1962, 3; and “Increase in Aust. defence spending,” *Examiner*, 25 October 1962, 6.

and North-East India had “added cause for grave concern.”⁴ The Cuban Crisis, however, would not interfere with the estimated delivery of the destroyers being built in the US.⁵ However, the coincidental timing of the programme launch with the Cuban Crisis, that is, with a major international crisis underway and the threat of nuclear war looming, was problematic for the Menzies Government.

The Menzies Government was widely criticised over the new programme for failing to adequately prepare Australia’s defence in an unstable world. Initial criticism directed at the Government came from its own Liberal backbenchers, as well as those associated with the defence community, such as the Returned Sailors’, Soldiers’ and Airmen’s Imperial League of Australia (RSSAILA) and former soldiers. Critics on the Government’s backbench lamented the Government’s expenditure on defence, arguing that the situations in Southeast Asia and on the India-China border necessitated increased spending. They were led by Wilfrid Kent Hughes (Liberal Member for Chisholm).

⁴ Ibid., 1878 and 1885. See also “£650m. Plan for Defence,” *Advertiser*, 25 October 1962, 3; and “Increase in Aust. defence spending,” *Examiner*, 25 October 1962, 6.

⁵ Question from Sam Benson (ALP, Member for Batman) to Townley (Liberal Party, Member for Denison), CPD, House, vol. 37, 24 October 1962, 1861; and Townley, *ibid.*, 1879. See also “£650m. Plan for Defence,” *Advertiser*, 25 October 1962, 3.



Illustration 4: *Sydney Morning Herald*, 27 October 1962, 2.

Speaking in a debate on the defence programme, Kent Hughes charged that the defence policy of the Government, of which he was a part, was “inadequate” to meet Australia’s overseas commitments or domestic defence requirements. His descriptions grew more harsh the longer he spoke, having later referred to the policy as “pathetic, pusillanimous and out of all proportion to Australia’s commitments in both cases.” With feelings of “grave disappointment and general disillusionment almost amounting to desperation,” he claimed that “the Government is out of touch with the thinking of the people who are seriously disturbed particularly as a result of recent events.”⁶ Kent Hughes was well-known for his outspoken views on Australia’s defence:

⁶ CPD, House, vol. 37, 25 October 1962, 1982 and 1984.

Restrained only by his sense of propriety, and by an idiosyncratic view of party loyalty, he became a prophet of gloom on the communist threat in Asia and Africa; he accused Menzies of knowing nothing about the 'Far East' and caring less; and he attacked the government's deficiencies in preparing Australia's defences.⁷

While he congratulated Menzies and the Government "on the firmness and swiftness of the decision" regarding the Cuban situation, he noted that "words in themselves are not sufficient."⁸

The *Sydney Morning Herald* was likewise critical of the Government regarding defence. Describing the programme as "puny," the newspaper lambasted the Government in its editorial of 10 November 1962 for what it considered to be an "attempt to shuffle off responsibility on to Service leaders," whom it defended by explaining that they were simply doing the best they could with the funds they had. It added: "It is the Government and the Government alone which has decided that defence should have a low priority; that Australia is in no immediate danger; that there is no threat from Indonesia." The newspaper accused the Menzies Government of putting Australia's defence preparations on a footing reminiscent of the 1940s. Australia, it argued, would no longer be afforded the time to prepare for a conflict once hostilities commenced, in terms of raising and training an army comparable to the one it had in World War II. Although it believed the Government had an "astonishingly unreal assessment of the basic requirements of Australia's security," it considered the stand of the ALP equally

⁷ I. R. Hancock, "Kent Hughes, Sir Wilfrid Selwyn (Billy) (1895–1970)," Australian Dictionary of Biography, National Centre of Biography, Australian National University (ANU), <http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/kent-hughes-sir-wilfrid-selwyn-billy-10723/text19001> (published in hardcopy 2000; accessed online 2 July 2017).

⁸ Wilfrid Kent Hughes, CPD, House, vol. 37, 25 October 1962, 1983.

disappointing. The notion of a nuclear-free-zone (NFZ) would only be reasonable, it claimed, if there were global general disarmament. Any agreement not to manufacture, acquire or receive nuclear weapons “would mean the virtual renunciation of our alliances with nuclear Powers,” it stated.⁹ The *Sydney Morning Herald* also published the criticisms of the RSSAILA and a number of critical letters to the editor.

The RSSAILA felt that more needed to be done and more money spent to increase the number of Australian military personnel. In documenting the views of the RSSAILA, the *Sydney Morning Herald* suggested that defence spending was so low that sending Australian troops into combat was comparable to a death sentence. The newspaper quoted RSSAILA National Treasurer and former Air Vice-Marshal F.M. Bladin, who stated that “Australia’s defence spending was far too low to put into the battlefield a force which could survive until help arrived from overseas.” NSW State President, W. Yeo, claimed that “Australia’s defence has never been weaker,” and asserted that the government should impose a defence tax to obtain the funds so that it could provide modern weapons. Yeo also suggested how personnel could be increased to build a force that could stand-up to Indonesia. Consequently, the RSSAILA congress urged the Menzies Government “to do all in its power to maintain a fully effective and adequately trained defence force equipped with up-to-date weapons,”¹⁰ and furthermore, “to give

⁹ “Defence Preparations on a 1940 Basis,” *Sydney Morning Herald*, 10 November 1962, 2.

¹⁰ “Defence Spending Criticised By R.S.L.,” *Sydney Morning Herald*, 31 October 1962, 4. The newspaper erroneously referred to the RSSAILA as the “Returned Servicemen’s League (RSL).” It became the Returned Services League of Australia (RSL) in October 1965: RSL (South Australia Branch), “National RSL History,” <http://rslsa.org.au/rsl-history/> (accessed 12 December 2017).

Australia nuclear weapons and sufficient aircraft to deliver them to the territory of any prospective enemy.”¹¹

The Air Force Association (AFA) also held its annual conference in the first week of November 1962. The Federal Council’s decision to advise the Government that Australia’s defence depended on air power, specifically bombers capable of carrying nuclear armed missiles, was perhaps unsurprising given that only a week earlier, the world stood on the brink of nuclear war and the Menzies Government had launched its new defence programme.¹²

Criticism and concern regarding the adequacy of Australia’s defence preparedness was expressed by Australia’s daily metropolitan newspapers. A *Sydney Morning Herald* editorial provided the sharpest critique:

The Government’s emphasis continues to be on the protection our allies, and especially the United States, afford us. There is no faintest recognition of the very real possibility that the crisis arising out of the Cuban situation could tie our allies’ hands and leave us alone to face Indonesian expansionism with pitifully inferior forces. Yesterday’s statement on defence was not the announcement of a defence program; it was an announcement that the Government had abdicated its national responsibilities.¹³

The *Sydney Morning Herald*’s claims of Government complacency and an ill-prepared defence force, were recurrent themes in letters to the editor. One letter writer, W.

¹¹ “Nuclear Weapons Urged,” *ibid.* Victorian delegates objected to this decision, but only on the grounds that nuclear weapons would consume the defence budget. As one Queensland delegate noted, Victorian views were based on the assumption that Australia would have to pay for its nuclear weapons.

¹² “Plea On Defence,” *Sydney Morning Herald*, 4 November 1962, 40.

¹³ “Abdication of National Responsibility,” *Sydney Morning Herald*, 25 October 1962, 2.

Forrest, called the Menzies Government “complacent about Australia’s pathetic defence program” because it considered Indonesia “friendly.” Distrustful of Australia’s neighbour, Forrest advocated that the Menzies Government acquire nuclear weapons to defend against, and to deter, a potentially “unfriendly Indonesia.” Forrest wrote: “A small population is best defended by the most powerful modern weapons. Some nuclear stations up north would be a powerful deterrent against aggression.”¹⁴ Another letter writer, Eric Campbell, offered no solutions to Australia’s defence problems but was adamant that Menzies’ oratory skills were not the answer. He stated: “The silver tongue of a brilliant Prime Minister may be a powerful weapon for silencing his critics, but it is a rather poor substitute for an efficient Army if someone comes knocking at our door.”¹⁵

The newspapers also received letters from ex-servicemen. Retired Rear-Admiral H.J. Buchanan, for example, criticised the Menzies Government regarding its strategic planning and method of allocating defence funds. For Buchanan, President Kennedy’s decision to draw on US sea power in the Cuban Crisis added to the numerous historical examples where “control of the sea is a vital issue in peace no less than in war.” He advocated that Australia should base its defence on a maritime strategy, determining the resources Australia could provide for its own security and that on which Australia would rely on its “powerful friends.” Having actively participated in Australian defence planning in the immediate post-war period, he claimed that “the procedure of offering

¹⁴ “Australia Needs Nuclear Weapons,” letter to the editor, *Sydney Morning Herald*, 10 November 1962, 2.

¹⁵ Eric Campbell, “Defence Of Australia: Both Flanks In The Air,” letter to the editor, *Sydney Morning Herald*, 12 November 1962, 2.

the Services a sum of money and leaving them to scramble for what each regards as a fair share was putting the cart before the horse.”¹⁶

Buchanan’s claim that the Services were scrambling among themselves for funding was telling of Australia’s expenditure on defence. In a letter to the editor of the *Sydney Morning Herald*, another retired Rear Admiral, Alec B. Doyle, blamed the Australian public for Menzies governments’ limited defence budgets. Doyle recalled the government’s earlier defence efforts following the 1951 election, which involved: recruitment, the reintroduction of compulsory military training, the dispatch of forces to Korea and Malaya, and the establishment of the ANZUS Security Treaty. Such efforts, he argued, received inadequate support from the wider community because “it was interested primarily in securing more leisure and a higher material standard of living.” One letter writer, J.M. Smail, maintained that, rather than focusing on procuring materiel at the best price, the Government should invest in Australian industry to ensure the country had the capacity to keep waging war.¹⁷ This, nevertheless, required substantial investment. Returning to Doyle, he concluded that “Governments remain in power only while they do what the mass of the people is prepared to accept.”¹⁸ Therefore, in Doyle’s view, the Government’s spending on defence was hamstrung by what was deemed acceptable to the public. It is likely that the Menzies Government considered that the Cuban Crisis would seemingly provide it with an ideal atmosphere

¹⁶ H. J. Buchanan, “The Defence Of Australia: ‘Cart Before The Horse’,” letter to the editor, *Sydney Morning Herald*, 19 November 1962, 2.

¹⁷ J. M. Smail, “Capacity To Wage War: Importance Of The Industrial Factor,” letter to the editor, *Sydney Morning Herald*, 3 November 1962, 2.

¹⁸ Alec B. Doyle, “Public Apathy To Defence: Sacrifice And Effort Needed,” letter to the editor, *Sydney Morning Herald*, 13 November 1962, 2.

in which to declare an increase in defence spending. Unfortunately for the Government however, the Cuban Crisis brought the possibility of conflict, especially nuclear conflict, to the forefront of the public's mind, and as demonstrated above, led many to question Australia's defence capabilities and preparedness.

Wayne Reynolds, whose scholarship on Australia's relationship with nuclear weapons was discussed in detail in Chapter 3, asserted that historians have never adequately explained why Menzies was criticised for not spending enough on defence at a time when war loomed large. Reynolds claimed that Menzies in fact "prepared Australian defences by strengthening industry. [Menzies] prepared not for war in Asia but for global war, and one in which the use of nuclear weapons would be commonplace."¹⁹ As shown in the latter part of this chapter, Menzies considered that only the Great Powers should possess nuclear weapons. Some government officials disagreed. Philip Baxter, Vice-Chancellor of the New South Wales University of Technology from 1955–69 and chairman of the Australian Atomic Energy Commission (AAEC) from 1956–72, "saw the military potential of nuclear power, and wanted Australia to have the capacity to build its own nuclear deterrent."²⁰ In Menzies' view, Australia's defence was best served, not by steep increases in the defence budget, but by smart investment in its alliances with its great and powerful friends. Indeed, his governments made modest

¹⁹ Wayne Reynolds, *Australia's Bid for the Atomic Bomb* (Carlton South, Victoria: Melbourne University Press, 2000), 1.

²⁰ This was in a part-time capacity barring 1969–72 when he became full-time chairman following his retirement from the University of New South Wales. He also represented Australia on the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) board of governors in 1957 and from 1964–72, having held the chairmanship from 1969–70: Philip Gissing, "Baxter, Sir John Philip (1905–1989)," *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, National Centre of Biography, ANU, <http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/baxter-sir-john-philip-12185> (published in hardcopy 2007; accessed online 21 July 2015).

financial investments in defence. Australia's expenditure on defence in the early 1960s was as low as 2.7 percent of gross national product, a figure "lower than any prosperous country except New Zealand."²¹ Thus, comparatively, Australia spent little on defence. Despite the increased expenditure under the new programme, many criticised the Menzies Government for such a paltry defence effort.

One contemporary academic claimed at the time that "While officially we [Australia] undertook a major defence effort in order to secure and carry influence in our alliances, in reality we relied upon our alliances to relax our defence effort."²² This was apparent in Townley's statement on the new defence programme in which he emphasised that "the main threat in the world today, can only be countered by the enhanced strength which comes from collective security."²³ He added: "we make a worth-while [*sic*] contribution to the security and stability of our more exposed friends. In turn, we attract the support of allies should we be threatened."²⁴

Australia's dependence on its allies and its policy of what is commonly referred to as "defence on the cheap", has consistently run counter to the views of British and American governments. Both the UK and the US have wanted to see Australian governments make a greater contribution towards their country's defence needs. The

²¹ Donald Horne, *The Lucky Country*, 3rd rev. edn. (Ringwood, Victoria: Penguin Books, 1971), 194. That New Zealand lagged behind Australia is noteworthy given that it saw so much of its own defence bound up with Australia.

²² Professor B.B. Beddie quoted in *ibid.*, 195.

²³ Townley, CPD, House, vol. 37, 24 October 1962, 1878–9. See also "£650m. Plan for Defence," *Advertiser*, 25 October 1962, 3.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, 1879.

UK made this point as early as 1946 at the Commonwealth Prime Ministers' Conference when, in light of its limited post-war capacity, it emphasised the need for the Australian Government to increase its efforts. The diminished defence capabilities of the UK also highlighted to Australia the necessity of continuing its wartime relationship with the US during peacetime.²⁵

The criticism that accompanied the launch of the Menzies Government's defence programme and the Cuban Crisis did not prompt any immediate changes to Australia's new defence programme. In his comments on the 1963 Budget, the Treasurer, Harold Holt, referred to a large expansion in the armed services with a progressive increase in defence expenditure in subsequent years. This, he noted, prompted a full review of the situation in Southeast Asia "'in the light of our treaty arrangements'".²⁶ In fact, it was not until 10 November 1964, that Menzies tabled in Parliament a comprehensive review of Australia's defence forces, which resulted in the decision to increase manpower significantly. The review, Menzies claimed, followed "'a deterioration in our strategic position'".²⁷ This illustrates that, for the Menzies Government, the nuclear threat posed by the Cuban Crisis and its potential repercussions were not significant enough to warrant any immediate changes in Australia's strategic position.

²⁵ Roger Holdich, Vivianne Johnson, Pamela Andre, eds., *The ANZUS Treaty 1951*, Documents on Australian Foreign Policy (Canberra: Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, 2001), xxviii.

²⁶ Quoted in Harry Rayner, *Scherger: A biography of Air Chief Marshal Sir Frederick Scherger KBE CB DSO AFC* (Canberra: Australian War Memorial (AWM), 1984), 152.

²⁷ R.G. Menzies, *Commonwealth Parliamentary Debates* (CPD), House of Representatives (House), 10 November 1964, http://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/genpdf/hansard80/hansardr80/1964-11-10/0145/hansard_frag.pdf;fileType=application%2Fpdf (accessed 27 August 2017), 1.

Nevertheless, bureaucrats in the Department of External Affairs were deeply concerned about the impact of the Cuban Crisis on Australia's strategic position. Specifically, they were worried about the detrimental effect the crisis and any potential war could have on the capacity of the US to assist Australia to defend against regional communist threats. This was exacerbated by increased tensions between the US and the Soviet Union over Berlin. Australian politicians and bureaucrats in External Affairs contemplated whether the Soviet Union would move on Berlin while the West was preoccupied with Cuba, which would result in crises on two fronts. Consequently, External Affairs advised Australian diplomats abroad that it was necessary "to prevent a situation arising which would concentrate United States attention on the Caribbean and Europe, and thus reduce her capability to take effective action, if necessary in South-East Asia."²⁸ The absence of cablegrams on the nuclear threat posed by the Cuban Crisis compared with several discussions on its possible effects on the Australia-US alliance and Australian regional security, suggests that the latter subject was of greater concern to the Menzies Government.

²⁸ National Archives of Australia, Canberra (NAA): A1838, 262/12/8/1 part 1, outward cablegram (O. 19418), Department of External Affairs, Canberra (External Affairs) to Australian Mission to UN, New York, and Australian Embassy, Washington (Washington Embassy), 20 October 1962 [*sic*], correct date: 29 October 1962 (as noted on the final page of the cablegram), 2. See also NAA: A1838, 262/12/8/1 part 1, paper on "Points for Public Presentation" with annotations (author and audience unknown; likely an External Affairs official to Garfield Barwick, Minister for External Affairs), 23 October 1962, 2.

Australia's Preparedness for Nuclear War

As noted in the previous section and in Chapter 2, the Menzies Government was not preoccupied by the *nuclear* nature of the threat posed by the Cuban Crisis. More specifically, the Government did not perceive a direct nuclear threat to Australian territory during the crisis. This is demonstrated by official records that contain no discussion of such a threat. Remarkably, for example, there are no references to the nuclear nature of the crisis in the Cabinet notebook, nor the cablegrams of the Department of External Affairs. The Government's perception of the nuclear threat however, is consistent with the views of the wider Australian population towards nuclear weapons in the early 1960s.

Poll data provides insight into the threat perceptions of Australians in the years either side of the Cuban Crisis. Australians were asked: "Do you believe the Western countries and Russia can continue to live peacefully together, or is there bound to be a major war sooner or later?" Of the 1,650 Australians polled before the Cuban Crisis in 1961, 43 percent believed the countries could live in peace and 37 percent believed war was likely (20 percent were listed as "other"). Similar numbers of people polled believed in the possibility of peace and war. When 1,900 Australians were polled in 1963, and thus after the crisis, 58 percent believed the countries could live in peace and only 26 percent believed there would be war (16 percent were listed as "other").²⁹ Thus, in 1963, the majority of Australians polled believed that peaceful coexistence between the West and

²⁹ David Campbell, *Australian Public Opinion on National Security Issues*, Working Paper No.1 (Canberra: Peace Research Centre, ANU, 1986), 27, cited in Alan Dupont, *Australia's Threat Perceptions: A Search for Security* (Canberra: Strategic and Defence Studies Centre, Research School of Pacific Studies, ANU, 1991), Annex C, 100.

the Soviet Union was possible and they did not anticipate a major war. This is significant given how perilously close the superpowers had come to nuclear annihilation in 1962, and given that in this period, a major war possibly involved the use of nuclear weapons. Also, it is difficult to believe that the Cuban Crisis did not influence those polled given the timeframes in which interviews were undertaken. Seemingly, to the 58 percent of people polled that believed the countries could live in peace, aversion of a major and nuclear war over Cuba, was possibly evidence of peaceful coexistence. While this poll obviously sampled a small section of the population, contemporary views detailed below indicate that such beliefs were consistent with those of the Menzies Government in this period in terms of strategic and civil defence planning.

In the *Strategic Basis of Australian Defence Policy of January 1962*, the Defence Committee concluded that “there would be no threat of nuclear attack except in global war.” Even if such circumstances arose, in the Defence Committee's assessment, “Australia would not be an early or primary target for nuclear attack.” Such an assessment naturally had consequences for civil defence planning. The Defence Committee stated: “During the early stages of global war, Australia and her Island Territories would have no significance to the communist bloc and would therefore be unlikely to be subjected to nuclear attack.” It concluded, therefore, that “any substantial diversion of resources to Civil Defence is not warranted.”³⁰

³⁰ Stephan Frühling, ed., *A History of Australian Strategic Policy Since 1945* (Canberra: Defence Publishing Service, Department of Defence, 2009), 294.

Australian civil defence policy had reflected such low nuclear threat perceptions since the late 1950s. In September 1959, Minister for the Interior, Gordon Freeth, announced the reorganisation of Australia's Civil Defence Directorate. This announcement prompted the only major debate on civil defence during the Cold War. In his parliamentary statement, Freeth described the nuclear threat to Australia as remote but not to "be ruled out entirely." He stated that the civil defence programme "should be consistent with the overall defence policy and programme and related at any time to the assessment of the strategic situation." Accordingly, Freeth concluded that as a nuclear threat to Australia was unlikely, a diversion of resources from the armed forces to civil defence could not be justified; it was "not warranted at the present time," he stated.³¹ Freeth's statements, which were consistent with the advice of the Defence Committee, demonstrate that although civil defence should have been *consistent* with defence policy, it was not considered part of that policy, and therefore, was treated as a separate issue. The Menzies Government's response to the nuclear threat posed by the Cuban Crisis is therefore consistent with its low nuclear threat perception reflected in strategic planning documents and civil defence policy. Significantly, the crisis did not prompt the Government to reconsider its strategic plans or civil defence preparedness.

Australian civil defence policy and planning reflects an immature understanding of thermonuclear weapons. Rapid developments in nuclear weapons technology in the 1950s marked a new and more dangerous phase of the nuclear arms race. The first successful test of a thermonuclear device, which was performed by the US at Eniwetok

³¹ Gordon Freeth (Liberal Party, Member for Forrest), CPD, House, vol. 24, 29 September 1959, 1521.

Atoll on 1 November 1952, was 500 times more powerful than the first plutonium bombs and 1,000 times more powerful than the Hiroshima bomb.³² By March 1954, the US and the Soviet Union had each produced a *deliverable* thermonuclear weapon.³³ The major threat posed by thermonuclear weapons is their enormous explosive power, which can be packed into small, light-weight packages deliverable by missiles.³⁴ Thus, as more powerful nuclear weapons with better accuracy, invulnerability, and deliverable at greater speeds were developed, the danger intensified. It would take hours for the first US nuclear weapons to reach their targets; they weighed thousands of pounds and were deliverable by hulking strategic bombers. Technological developments in the 1950s, such as ICBMs and submarine-launched ballistic missiles (SLBMs), enabled nuclear warheads to traverse oceans and continents in minutes rather than hours.³⁵ Subsequently, such developments placed all countries within range of nuclear attack and radioactive fallout. A country's geography, in terms of its distance from other states and its greatness in size, was no longer advantageous. In his memoirs in 1960, British Prime

³² Reynolds, *Australia's Bid for the Atomic Bomb*, 126–7. For a useful overview of the differences between thermonuclear weapons and earlier nuclear weapons technology, see “Types of Nuclear Weapons,” Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization (CTBTO) Preparatory Commission: Preparatory commission for the comprehensive nuclear-test-ban treaty organization, <https://www.ctbto.org/nuclear-testing/types-of-nuclear-weapons/> (accessed 15 August 2015).

³³ The US monopoly on the hydrogen bomb ended on 12 August 1953 when the Soviet Union exploded a thermonuclear device. Unlike the US device, the Soviet one could already be assembled into a deliverable bomb since its dimensions matched those of the first atomic bomb. However, contemporary US assessments determined that this device was more like a boosted atomic weapon than a “superbomb”—as the highly powerful hydrogen bombs were then known. Historian on Soviet nuclear weapons and nuclear energy, David Holloway, pointed out that the Soviet Union nevertheless had managed to produce a *deliverable hydrogen bomb* six-months ahead of the US; see David Holloway, *Stalin and the Bomb: The Soviet Union and Atomic Energy, 1939–1956*, e-book edn. (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1994), 305–8 and 317. Reynolds incorrectly dated the Soviet Union's first thermonuclear test 20 August 1953: *Australia's Bid for the Atomic Bomb*, 127. The US tested its first deliverable thermonuclear weapon on 1 March 1954; see “Types of Nuclear Weapons,” CTBTO Preparatory Commission. Holloway also stated that “even if one takes the view that [the 1953 device] was not a ‘real’ thermonuclear bomb,” the Soviet Union tested a superbomb on 22 November 1955, just 20 months after the US had conducted an equivalent test: Holloway, *Stalin and the Bomb*, 317. For further discussion on the 1955 test, see 314–7.

³⁴ “Types of Nuclear Weapons,” CTBTO Preparatory Commission.

³⁵ See David E. Hoffman, *The Dead Hand: The Untold Story of the Cold War Arms Race and Its Dangerous Legacy* (New York: Doubleday, 2009), 15.

Minister from 1955–57, Anthony Eden, remarked on the changes brought about by thermonuclear weapons:

One consequence of the evolution from the atomic to the hydrogen bomb was to diminish the advantage of physically larger countries. All became equally vulnerable. I had been acutely conscious in the atomic age of our unenviable position in a small and crowded island, but if continents, and not merely small islands, were doomed to destruction, all was equal in the grim reckoning.³⁶

Such technological developments were also addressed in contemporary popular culture. For example, Nevil Shute's 1957 novel *On the Beach*, which was later adapted for screen in the 1959 Stanley Kramer film of the same name, tells the story of Australians coming to terms with the end of life on Earth following the outbreak of nuclear war in the northern hemisphere.³⁷

Scholars have recognised that technological developments in weaponry and delivery systems prompted new understandings of the relationship between nuclear weapons and geography. In her book *Australia and the Bomb*, Christine Leah stated: "Nuclear weapons contract time and space; they 'connect' allies (especially those in faraway lands such as Australia) in a way that was not possible before without forward deploying substantial conventional forces to the ally's territory—a costly exercise."³⁸ Equally, nuclear weapons also connect enemies in a way not previously possible.

³⁶ Anthony Eden, *The Memoirs of the Rt. Hon. Sir Anthony Eden K.G., P.C., M.C.: Full Circle* (London: Cassell & Company Ltd, 1960), 368.

³⁷ Nevil Shute, *On the Beach* (London: The Book Club, 1957); and IMDb, "On the Beach," http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0053137/?ref_=nv_sr_2 (accessed 21 June 2017).

³⁸ Christine M. Leah, *Australia and the Bomb* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014), 126.

Despite the convincing effects of technological developments in nuclear weaponry, some have failed to recognise how such changes have prompted new understandings of the relationship between thermonuclear weapons and geography. For example, international relations scholar Jacques E. C. Hymans, claimed in one of his published case studies on Australia and the nuclear weapons option in the period 1949–99:

It is hard to see why Australia, a country blessed with a supremely ‘lucky’ geographical position, was so eager to participate in Western nuclear defenses—thereby raising its significance as a Chinese or Soviet nuclear target.³⁹

While nuclear weapons bases were in fact geographically distant from Australia, to suggest its geographical position was both fortunate and relevant in the thermonuclear age reflects a naivety regarding the capabilities and effects of such weapons and associated technologies. Hymans' repetition of outdated perceptions in 2000, which, as shown in this section, were outdated in the early 1960s, is therefore remarkable.

Such naivety over thermonuclear weapons is reflected in civil defence policy and plans of the Menzies governments in the 1950s and early 1960s. As shown above, geography became irrelevant following technological developments in nuclear weaponry and delivery systems in the late 1950s. But it nevertheless continued to play a significant part in the strategic defence policy and planning of the Menzies governments. Bizarrely, at the height of the Cold War, the Menzies governments considered that Australia's geographic isolation from the major powers and its allies both protected it from nuclear threats, thus rejecting the need for civil defence policy and planning, and exposed its

³⁹ Jacques E.C. Hymans, “Isotopes and Identity: Australia and the Nuclear Weapons Option, 1949–1999,” *The Nonproliferation Review* 7, no. 1 (2000): 1.

vulnerability in terms of its defence capacity thus driving its desire to secure a US presence in its region and to acquire nuclear weapons. Remarkably, even the possible acquisition of nuclear weapons did not prompt the Menzies governments to re-evaluate the potential change in threat level that would be brought about by their possession.

Some in the Menzies Government however, had a much less insouciant attitude toward nuclear weapons and war. Unlike policymakers in Canberra, Australian delegates to the UN in New York were highly cognisant of the possibility of an outbreak of nuclear conflict during the Cuban Crisis. For Australian UN delegate, Richard Woolcott, the crisis was an anxious time. In an interview aired on Australian Broadcasting Corporation (ABC) Local Radio during the fiftieth anniversary of the crisis, Woolcott told listeners: “I was, frankly, deeply personally worried about not only the future of my family [in Kuala Lumpur], but the future of New York, Moscow, and indeed the impact this would have on the whole world.”⁴⁰ Woolcott also read the following poem, which he wrote during the crisis:

⁴⁰ Poem by Richard Woolcott, “Cuban Missile Crisis special” (presented by Richard Fidler), *ABC Local Radio*, broadcasted 15 October 2012, <http://www.abc.net.au/local/stories/2012/10/15/3610878.htm> (accessed 15 October 2012). The programme was also broadcasted on *ABC Radio National* on 17 October 2012.

As the sun sinks through the torn red edges of the skyline,
one wonders if it will rise again tomorrow.
As the stench of catastrophe rises from the newspapers at supper,
as the lights of the city come on, twinkling, beckoning, beautiful to us
now,
one wants to see them again tomorrow.
Days which yesterday seemed like dusty milestones on the dreary road to
death, weeks which withered, fell away like autumn leaves, now seem
precious.
Each day welcomed with warmth and tenderness, as it lives into the next,
its straining fingers gripping the ledge overhanging the abyss of self-
destruction.
Outside the tension has turned into a crisis,
enveloping the jousting giants who have created it.
The hurricane rages, menacing, incomprehensible,
while in its eye the innocent sleep fitfully, uncomprehendingly, hopefully
waiting for the dawn for the sun to rise again.⁴¹

In his moving yet ominous poem, Woolcott articulated the sense of dread, precariousness, and helplessness that he, and likely others, felt over the potential outbreak of nuclear war. The reference to the superpowers—“jousting giants”—suggests that there was little other actors could do to influence and resolve the crisis. In his reflections on the crisis in his memoir, he stated that it was “instructive in that it revealed the lack of real power and influence of the United Nations in a situation in which the two superpowers came into direct and serious confrontation.”⁴² Significantly, Woolcott’s poem also reveals that one’s proximity to nuclear missile bases influences their perception of the threat. That is, from his location in New York—a target within striking range from Cuba—Woolcott perceived the threat posed by the Cuban Crisis to be more severe than officials located afar in Canberra.

⁴¹ Ibid.

⁴² Richard Woolcott, *The Hot Seat: Reflections on Diplomacy from Stalin’s Death to the Bali Bombings* (Sydney: HarperCollinsPublishers, 2003), 202.

As this chapter demonstrates, several sections of the Australian population had similar reactions to Woolcott over the Cuban Crisis. For many, the crisis brought home the dangers posed by thermonuclear weapons. Moreover, and as shown in the remainder of this section, the crisis prompted increased interest among the wider Australian population about civil defence and the adequacy of Australia's preparedness for nuclear war. This was not the case in the US. According to historian Alice L. George, there was a decline in interest in civil defence among Americans in the years following the Cuban Crisis.⁴³ While a theoretical discussion on nuclear deterrence is beyond the scope of this thesis, it is worth noting here that contrasting reactions regarding civil defence reflect different understandings of nuclear deterrence, and this warrants further research. Some theorists have argued that the Cuban Crisis is an example of when nuclear deterrence has worked. As Benoît Pelopidas demonstrated in "We all lost the Cuban Missile Crisis," such an argument is conceptually flawed because it assumes there is a universal or consistent interpretation of nuclear deterrence.⁴⁴ Significantly, this thesis shows that different states, even allies, and the communities within those states, have different understandings of nuclear deterrence. In Australia, the reactions to the crisis of other legislative bodies, professional associations, a school, and the media, which contrast with the Menzies Government's response and are discussed below, demonstrate different understandings of nuclear deterrence within Australia.

⁴³ See Alice L. George, *Awaiting Armageddon: How Americans Faced the Cuban Missile Crisis* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2003), 161–2. Prior to the crisis, US civil defence agencies by comparison were highly active in attempting to prepare local communities for nuclear war. For example, information bulletins produced by the Office of Civil and Defense Mobilization in early February 1961 outlined: fallout shelter promotion campaigns; the release of a film on civil defence in schools; and a civil defence programme focused on rural youth, which included the distribution of civil defence information kits. These bulletins can be found in NAA: A1209, 1957/5644.

⁴⁴ Benoît Pelopidas, "We all lost the Cuban Missile Crisis: Revisiting Richard Ned Lebow and Janice Gross Stein's landmark analysis in *We All Lost the Cold War*," in *The Cuban Missile Crisis: A critical reappraisal*, Len Scott and R. Gerald Hughes, eds. Cold War History Series (Oxon: Routledge, 2015), 165–82.

An external affairs matter, the Cuban Crisis was obviously the business of the Commonwealth Parliament. While discussions on civil defence were not documented during the crisis at the federal level, that is, in the Cabinet Notebook, departmental cablegrams, or Hansard (House of Representatives and Senate), such discussions were had in other Australian legislative bodies, specifically, the New South Wales Parliament (as outlined in Chapter 1), the Australian Capital Territory Advisory Council, and the Sydney City Council. The crisis sparked discussions in these forums regarding civil defence, specifically, that state, territory or city's preparedness for nuclear war.

At a meeting of the Australian Capital Territory (ACT) Advisory Council (later the Legislative Assembly) on 3 December 1962, Council member Robert Picton Greenish expressed strong concern about the protection available to Canberra residents from nuclear attack.⁴⁵ Greenish moved:

That it be recommended to the Minister that immediate action be taken to provide suitable underground bomb shelters, including protection as much as possible from nuclear attack, in the suitable areas such as Mount Ainslie, and Black Mountain, in the A.C.T to enable all citizens to receive some protection from such attacks.

Not wanting to appear alarmist to other members of the Council, Greenish then stated:

⁴⁵ From September 1961–64, the Council consisted of twelve members: eight elected and four appointed each by the departments of Works and Railways, Home Affairs, Health, and the Attorney-General. Established so that ACT residents had representation on local issues, the Council was replaced by a Legislative Assembly in 1974. See Chris Monnox, "ACT Advisory Council Elected Members, 1930–1974," ACT Government: Libraries (February 2012), http://www.library.act.gov.au/find/history/frequentlyaskedquestions/personal_stories/act_advisory_council_1930-1974 (accessed 13 August 2014).

I don't wish it to be understood that this motion is moved from any sense of panic or near-panic over the Cuban situation which occurred a few weeks ago and happily resulted in a lessening of tensions at that time, but as Mr. Kennedy made his speech many of us were looking to our local civil defence measures, and we found them very lacking.

Greenish's comments affirm both the little attention that the Menzies Government had paid to civil defence and the influence that the Cuban Crisis had on his reflections. Greenish had in fact queried Canberra's civil defence preparedness on 5 November 1962 (two meetings prior).

The establishment of underground bomb shelters was in fact under consideration by the Sydney City Council following the most intense period of the Cuban Crisis. At its meeting on 29 October 1962, the Council commissioned a report on the use of the city's tunnels as war shelters. Motivated by "the uncertain international situation," the Council wanted to assess the feasibility of their use as a civil defence measure for citizens against fallout, blast, etc., from atomic and other missiles."⁴⁶ The following day, readers of the *Sydney Morning Herald* were informed of the Council's discussions and actions.⁴⁷ Alderman G. Roper asserted that many lives could be saved using the numerous tunnels beneath Sydney, and according to the newspaper, Roper claimed that the numbers of tunnels was unlikely to be rivalled by any other comparable city. The "international situation" also pressed Alderman C.L. Kyle to ask when the federal government would appoint a civil defence controller for Sydney; the Council had agreed to pay half of the controller's salary. Lord Mayor Alderman H.F. Jensen advised

⁴⁶ City of Sydney Archives, Sydney: 6767/62, Minute by the Town Clerk, "Civil Defence - Question of use of tunnels under City as shelters for citizens," 31 October 1962.

⁴⁷ See "City's Tunnels To Be Considered As War Shelters," *Sydney Morning Herald*, October 30, 1962, 6.

that a report would also be produced on this matter.⁴⁸ The Council minutes demonstrate that the international situation—the Cuban Crisis—had prompted the Sydney City Council to evaluate Sydney’s civil defence capacity and the measures it could take if the city faced nuclear attack. Despite the most intense period of the crisis having passed, Council urged that the reports be made with haste. This suggests that the Council recognised at that time the proximity of thermonuclear war, that Australia was within its reaches, and the precarious situation that remained. Sydney City Council however, was an exception: the international situation and civil defence were not discussed by the Melbourne or Brisbane city councils.⁴⁹

While the Sydney City Council considered ways it could aid its constituents, residents of Burnie, Tasmania, were encouraged to contemplate their own survival. At the peak of the Cuban Crisis, pamphlets issued by the Commonwealth Directorate of Civil Defence titled “Survival From Nuclear Warfare” were disseminated to primary school students. The pamphlet, which Tasmanian daily newspaper the *Mercury* described as “blood-red” in colour, opened with an illustration of a ruined school made of reinforced concrete located 500 yards from the epicentre of the Hiroshima atom-bomb. Although parents of the students acknowledged that they were the intended recipients of the pamphlets, at least some were outraged that such information had been delivered directly to their children. One parent told a newspaper reporter that “there was probably no better means of spreading panic in the community.” He added: “My children were so alarmed that all

⁴⁸ Ibid. See also City of Sydney Archives, Sydney: 6767/62, Minute by the Town Clerk, “Civil Defence – Question of use of tunnels under City as shelters for citizens,” 31 October 1962.

⁴⁹ Public Record Office of Victoria, Melbourne: VPRS 8910, P1 Unit 94, Minute Books of Council Meetings, Sydney City Council, 1962–1963; and Brisbane Square Library, Brisbane: BCA0001, Minutes and Proceedings, Brisbane City Council, 1962.

they could think about was Cuba, to read all they could in newspapers of the situation, and to listen to wireless news bulletins.”⁵⁰

The anxiety induced in children by the prospect of nuclear war was witnessed in the US. The *Sydney Morning Herald* reported on 4 November 1962 that according to Sibylle Escalona, a doctor at the Albert Einstein College of Medicine, psychiatrists were treating thousands of children throughout the US because of their fear of nuclear war. Many children, as young as four and five years old, were frightened by passenger planes flying overhead, concerned that they would drop atom bombs. Others were scared of rain and snow or refused to drink milk, believing that they were “poisoned” by fallout. Escalona claimed that children’s fears are caused by adults; that is, increased fear felt by adults results in increased fear experienced by children. She issued a booklet “Children and the Threat of Nuclear War” to help parents to support their children and prevent them from becoming “nuclear neurotics.”⁵¹ Escalona's booklet seemingly would have been a useful accompaniment to the civil defence pamphlet.

The sole reference to Burnie Primary School in the *Mercury*, as well as Hobart’s other daily newspaper the *Examiner*, suggests that it was the only school to disseminate such pamphlets. This indicates that this action was instigated by the school and not by the federal or state governments, nor their agencies. That Burnie Primary School therefore

⁵⁰ “Nuclear pamphlet objection,” *Mercury*, October 25, 1962, 2. See also “Protest at Burnie on N-pamphlet,” *Examiner*, October 25, 1962, 2.

⁵¹ “Tots scared of H-Bombs: Under medical care,” *Sydney Morning Herald*, 4 November 1962, 41.

felt it necessary to distribute these pamphlets during the crisis shows it was acutely aware of the seriousness of the situation and its potential ramifications, even for Australia's most southern state. While the pamphlets and the crisis had provoked anxiety in the children of Burnie, it is difficult, however, to ascertain the reaction of Burnie residents to the crisis. Their response, as outlined in the newspapers, was focused on the careless dissemination of the pamphlets.

While the Commonwealth Directorate of Civil Defence advocated a message of survival, the crisis almost passed without mention in one popular women's periodical. In the editorial column of the *Australian Women's Weekly* Dorothy Drain wrote:

The coiner of the word 'brinkmanship' must be gnashing his teeth. He should have saved it for the past couple of weeks when it came into its full flower of meaning.

It now seems (or it did when this went to press—one must be careful not to make rash forecasts) that Christmas will come after all. The overseas cards were worth posting. With continuing luck, their destinations will be there.⁵²

This was the only reference to the crisis found in the issues published between October and November 1962.⁵³ Dorothy Drain's comments regarding brinkmanship, that the existence of destinations would continue, and that one should avoid rash forecasts, indicate that she recognised the significance and precariousness of the crisis. However, her apparent relief that Christmas would be celebrated and her reference to overseas cards suggests that the crisis was an event felt on foreign shores, not in Australia.

Although major news stories are within the magazine's scope, it seems that Australia

⁵² Dorothy Drain, "It seems to me," *Australian Women's Weekly*, 14 November 1962, 4.

⁵³ There was no mention of the crisis in the issues published on 24 October, 31 October, and 7 November 1962, or in subsequent issues published on 21 November and 28 November 1962.

was considered beyond the reach of nuclear war. This may also explain why preparedness for such an event was not urged in the *Australian Women's Weekly* in comparison to American periodicals.⁵⁴

It was not the only periodical that made reference to the crisis in the context of future events. George Molnar, cartoonist for the *Sydney Morning Herald*, suggested that a resolution of the crisis would be timely given the forthcoming Melbourne Cup—Australia's most famous horse race.

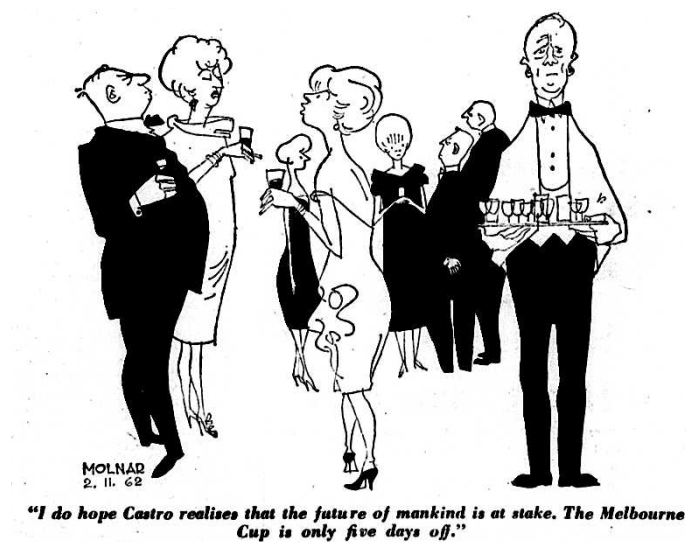


Illustration 5: *Sydney Morning Herald*, 2 November 1962, 2.

The crisis prompted the Australian medical profession's peak organisation, the Australian Medical Association (AMA), to reflect in its journal on Australia's readiness to attend to the "medical consequences of thermonuclear war." In an article of the same

⁵⁴ George, *Awaiting Armageddon*, 161–2.

name, the AMA characterised Australians, “rightly or wrongly, realistically or not,” as ignorant of the effects of nuclear conflict.

To most of us this sort of thing seems remote in distance and possibility as compared with the prospect in the northern hemisphere. In particular, we have not been exposed to the torrent of spoken and written words on the subject that has been poured out in North America, and we know nothing of the widespread debate over community preparedness and the conflict over such things as group and household shelters. At least on the surface, to use the ugly but apt modern phrase, most Australians could not care less. Even the Cuban situation has not shaken us greatly.⁵⁵

The *Sydney Morning Herald* brought the concerns of the AMA to the public’s attention. In its article “Medical Plans For Nuclear War Urged,” it opened with, and therefore emphasised, the organisation’s criticism of Australians having a “could-not-care-less” attitude.⁵⁶ The AMA surmised as to why this was the general consensus:

This may be foolish complacency. It may be our response to a half-realized sense of helplessness. Certainly it is better than panic or a community anxiety state. But it is regrettable if it indicates the deliberate assumption of an ostrich posture.⁵⁷

The AMA proffered Australia’s geographic location as a possible explanation for the complacency of its population in terms of preparedness. Prime Minister Menzies had in fact perpetuated this view. In his parliamentary statement, Menzies concentrated on the threat the Cuban Crisis posed to the Americas.⁵⁸ Such references to the crisis positioned it as a regional issue, which indicates that there was a perception that a nuclear conflict between the Soviet Union, Cuba, and the US could be confined to the Caribbean. As

⁵⁵ AMA, “Medical Consequences of Thermonuclear War,” *Medical Journal of Australia* 2, no. 19 (10 November 1962): 759–60.

⁵⁶ See “Medical Plans For Nuclear War Urged,” *Sydney Morning Herald*, November 20, 1962, 10.

⁵⁷ AMA, “Medical Consequences of Thermonuclear War,” 759.

⁵⁸ R.G. Menzies, CPD, House, vol. 37, 23 October 1962, 1780–1.

noted earlier in this chapter, this possibly explains the Government's silence during the crisis regarding civil defence preparedness. Moreover, and as discussed in the next section, this demonstrates a level of naivety about the technological effects of thermonuclear weapons.

It was not unreasonable, therefore, that the AMA concluded that most Australians believed they were beyond the reach of nuclear war. Furthermore, the Cuban Crisis had, for the most part, left Australians unshaken. In her seminal study on Australia's nuclear ambitions, Alice Cawte drew the same conclusion. Cawte claimed that in the decade following World War II, "Australia's distance from areas of international tension had also given rise to a measure of complacency about nuclear weapons."⁵⁹ The AMA did, however, suggest a way forward:

The least we can do is to become reasonably informed and to determine our attitude, whatever it may be, on a responsible basis. Not least of those on whom the community tends to depend, members of the medical profession need to face the issues involved, indeterminate though many of the answers may seem to be.⁶⁰

The remainder of the article offered considerations for practitioners that had been raised in a symposium published in the *New England Journal of Medicine*.⁶¹ Like those conducting the symposium, the AMA urged its members to act because "no single group

⁵⁹ Alice Cawte, *Atomic Australia: 1944–1990* (Australia: New South Wales University Press, 1992), ix.

⁶⁰ AMA "Medical Consequences of Thermonuclear War," 759.

⁶¹ Massachusetts Medical Society, "The Medical Consequences of Thermonuclear War," *New England Journal of Medicine* 266, no. 22 (31 May 1962): 1126–45.

is so deeply involved in and committed to the survival of mankind as is the medical profession.”⁶²

There was inadequate time for sections of the Australian population to formulate their position on the Cuban Crisis, coordinate with each other, and mobilise, before the Government swiftly formulated and announced Australia’s policy on the crisis. The inability of organisations to influence the Menzies Government during the crisis was not an unusual or isolated case. In his official history of Australia’s involvement in Southeast Asian conflicts from 1948 to 1965, Peter Edwards claimed that the Government did little to foster informed public debate on foreign policy issues. This, he stated, was partially attributable to the view that “at times of international crisis, the less said the better [...] A slip of the tongue or a misreported comment could have disastrous consequences.”⁶³ This was certainly true of the Government during the Cuban Crisis: it made only two public statements on the subject, and rather than delivering them to the press, it delivered them to the Parliament. Edwards also attributed the Government’s reluctance to encourage debate on foreign policy matters as being due to its faith in its policy-making method and decisions, which it felt did not need to undergo the electorate’s scrutiny. Edwards wrote:

⁶² AMA, “Medical Consequences of Thermonuclear War,” 759. See also, *ibid.*, 1126.

⁶³ Peter G. Edwards with Gregory Pemberton, *Crises and Commitments: The Politics and Diplomacy of Australia’s Involvement in Southeast Asian Conflicts 1948–1965*. The Official History of Australia’s Involvement in Southeast Asian Conflicts 1948–1975 (Sydney: Allen & Unwin in association with the Australian War Memorial, 1992), 380.

as the years passed, the Menzies Government also gave the impression that it was increasingly confident of the wisdom of its fundamental approach and saw little need to have that approach questioned or debated, even when—perhaps especially when—ministers entertained some private doubts.⁶⁴

The Menzies Government's confidence in its decision-making during the Cuban Crisis was evident in the swiftness with which it determined and declared its policy. As demonstrated in Chapter 4, the Government, specifically External Affairs, had doubts about the US handling of the crisis. The Government considered it imperative that such views be kept secret to avoid jeopardising the US alliance. There is no documentary evidence that the Government sought intentionally to keep its doubts regarding the handling of the Cuban Crisis from the Australian electorate's purview. Nevertheless, the combination of private doubts and confidence described by Edwards perpetuated the Government's disengagement with the public on matters of foreign policy during the Cuban Crisis.

This section has shown that at the time of the Cuban Crisis, the Menzies Government and the wider Australian population placed little importance on the threat of nuclear war and its potential effects. This is reflected in: the absence of documents demonstrating civil defence was deemed to be important during the Cuban Crisis by the Cabinet or other federal government departments and agencies; Australian strategic and defence planning documents developed prior to the crisis in which civil defence received little attention; in the main parliamentary statement on civil defence outlined above in which the Government prescribed a limited investment in civil defence; in Menzies'

⁶⁴ Ibid.

parliamentary statement during the Cuban Crisis in which the Government's focus on the nuclear threat facing the Americas suggested that Australia was geographically remote from a nuclear conflict involving the superpowers, and its effects; and the reactions of those for whom the crisis prompted questions over Australia's preparedness for nuclear war, which indicated that civil defence measures were not in place. Contemporary and later analyses on nuclear war and civil defence labelled Australians complacent and suggested that such attitudes stemmed from a confidence in Australia's remote geographical position. While Richard Woolcott's reflections on the crisis demonstrated that geographical location was relevant to how the nuclear threat the crisis posed was perceived and understood, most Menzies Government officials and the wider Australian population had a rather naive view of thermonuclear weapons. This was evidenced in the Menzies Government's second parliamentary statement on the crisis, which is discussed in the next section.

The Menzies Government's Second Public Statement on the Cuban Crisis

In his assessment of Australian foreign policy in action, Gordon Greenwood stated that some matters could and should have been raised in the UN and their resolution attempted there. He wrote:

There were many questions which could and should be properly referred to the international organisation, and a settlement by this means was often worth attempting even if there was the probability that in some instances a solution would not be forthcoming.⁶⁵

⁶⁵ Gordon Greenwood, "Australian Foreign Policy in Action," in *Australia in World Affairs, 1961 - 1965*, Gordon Greenwood and Norman Harper, eds. (Melbourne: F. W. Cheshire for the Australian Institute of International Affairs, 1968), 51.

The Menzies Government had encouraged such an approach. While Australia deliberately framed its support for the US in terms of its UN resolution, it did not depend on the UN to resolve the Cuban Crisis. The Government's view on such a solution was put eloquently to Parliament by Barwick on 6 November 1962 when he delivered the Menzies Government's second parliamentary statement on the Cuban Crisis.⁶⁶ It was a subject that the Government had not publicly discussed since 25 October 1962. Parliament had adjourned in the midst of the crisis, and by the time it returned, the most intense period was over. Labor Member for Yarra, J. F. Cairns, asked Menzies on 25 October whether he would "undertake not to involve Australia in any irrevocable decision, and to recall the Parliament if there should be any accentuation of the gravity of the present crisis." But the PM had no interest in predicting events or making such undertakings.⁶⁷ At no stage was the Parliament recalled during the recess.

In his detailed statement, the Minister for External Affairs provided the Parliament with a comprehensive account of the crisis. It had unfolded so swiftly that it was coming to an end as suddenly as it had begun. Barwick therefore considered it necessary to ensure the Parliament, and the Australian public, were adequately informed of events. He began by repeating key points from Kennedy's address that laid the blame on the Soviet Union. He asserted that "Disaster was averted," and thus the crisis resolved,

⁶⁶ CPD, House, vol. 37, 6 November 1962, 2049–54.

⁶⁷ J.F. Cairns (ALP, Member for Yarra) and R.G. Menzies, CPD, House, vol. 37, 25 October 1962, 1940.

only by the prompt and decisive action taken by the United States in conjunction with its regional powers in the Organization of American States, by the use of the machinery of the United Nations, and by the restraint exercised by the leaders of the United States and the Soviet Union in the course of negotiations for a peaceful issue to the crisis.⁶⁸

Barwick noted that “The Soviet challenge had to be met and the threat removed for the sake of the peoples of the Americas immediately and newly threatened.” Significantly however, he added:

Peoples in many parts of the world are allied for defence with the United States. If the United States had proved unable to defend herself and her Latin-American friends against the threat from Cuba how much could peoples thousands of miles away, faced with similar threats and pressures, have relied on United States assurances that she would assist to defend them?⁶⁹

For Australia and other allies of the US, the Cuban Crisis presented a litmus test: was the US dependable in the face of a regional communist threat? As emphasised throughout this thesis, Australia’s defence against communism hinged on American support. The Menzies Government pledged its support, albeit limited, to the American UN resolution, in order to obtain a maximum gain: the maintenance of its most important alliance in furtherance of its geo-strategic interests. It is unsurprising then that Barwick, like Menzies, emphasised the importance of regional arrangements recognised under the UN Charter in dealing with security threats. Clearly mindful of Australia’s arrangement with the US under ANZUS, Barwick stated, “In this crisis the need for and the efficacy of regional defence have been demonstrated.”⁷⁰

⁶⁸ CPD, House, vol. 37, 6 November 1962, 2049.

⁶⁹ Ibid., 2050.

⁷⁰ Ibid., 2053.

Barwick also credited the UN for the role it played in the Cuban Crisis regarding its resolution. He stated:

The United Nations clearly had a role to play, not merely in providing a forum in which the parties could seek to find a peaceful solution to the situation, but in itself actively promoting a basis for such a solution. Recourse to the United Nations offered a way of avoiding an armed conflict which might have escalated into nuclear war [...] The United States did not regard the mere reference of the question to the United Nations as being in itself a solution or as necessarily producing a solution, and retained the right to act to protect itself and its allies if the United Nations failed to assure them of protection. However, the efforts of the United Nations [...] deserve the highest praise. The strength which the initiative and determination of the President provided—a strength which the United Nations would not otherwise have had—has been used to good purpose so far and its use will, I hope, bring a secure solution.⁷¹

Barwick simultaneously commended and criticised the UN. The Government was aware that the passing of the American resolution was unlikely, and although there was still hope that a UN solution was achievable, Australia recognised that the US and the Soviet Union were the only ones capable of, and thus ultimately responsible for, bringing about an end to the crisis.

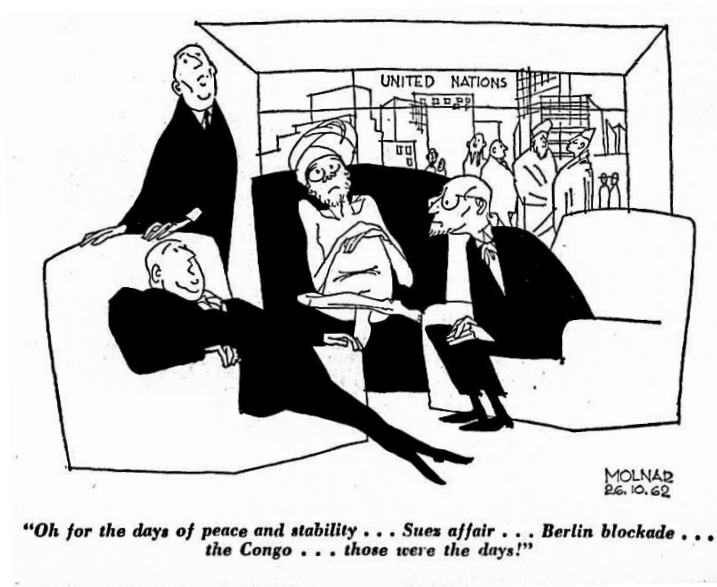


Illustration 6: *Sydney Morning Herald*, 26 October 1962, 2.

⁷¹ Ibid.

Nevertheless, as the next section shows, Australia played an active part at the UN during the crisis by encouraging support for the US position.

Australia at the United Nations, New York

Since the UN was founded, Australian governments have placed great importance on its capacity to maintain peace, but not at the expense of Australia's bilateral relations with its major allies, the UK and the US.⁷² In other words, its alliances took precedence over the UN and its role in international affairs. As this thesis shows, this approach reflects the Menzies Government's policy on the Cuban Crisis. As discussed in Chapter 1, Menzies declared to Parliament on 23 October 1962 that its Permanent Representative to the UN, James Plimsoll, had been instructed "to do all in his power" to support the passing of the US resolution before the Security Council (even though Australia did not sit on the Council).⁷³ It is therefore necessary to examine Australian activity at the UN during the crisis. This section discusses Australia's efforts to monitor closely developments at the UN. It examines Plimsoll's actions at the UN and compares them with the views of those in Canberra. It also evaluates whether, during the crisis, Menzies demonstrated a new appreciation for the UN. Finally, this section explores the Government's understanding of the role of the UN in resolving the crisis.

⁷² On this point regarding the Labor government under Prime Minister Ben Chifley from 1945–49, see Roger Holdich, Vivianne Johnson, Pamela Andre, eds., *The ANZUS Treaty 1951*, Documents on Australian Foreign Policy (Canberra: Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, 2001), xxviii.

⁷³ Menzies, CPD, House, vol. 37, 23 October 1962, 1780–1.

Recognising that Australia was not a party principal to the crisis and having determined that the Cuban situation was a regional crisis facing the US, officials in Canberra appointed themselves as observers of the crisis. The departments of External Affairs, Defence, and Prime Minister closely monitored the crisis as it unfolded in Washington D.C., Moscow, Havana, and at the UN in New York. In addition to copies of communiques provided by allies, Canberra-based officials sought and received numerous cablegrams from Australian legations around the world. Such correspondence revealed: the political positions chosen by other governments; how such positions were reported in their local media; and how the crisis and political responses to it were perceived by their populations.⁷⁴ Canberra was inundated with such a large volume of information from its overseas posts that one External Affairs official expressed concern that the teleprinter would get clogged.⁷⁵ For this Canberra-based official, a crisis of another kind was at hand. However, for officials in Canberra, who had already formulated and announced Australia's position on the crisis, such information was of little value in a policy-making context, and very little was forwarded to Plimsoll to support him in his interactions with other UN diplomatic missions.

In contrast to policy-makers in Canberra, Plimsoll and Australia's delegation to the UN in New York played a more active part during the crisis having been appointed by Canberra as advocates for the US resolution before the Security Council. Throughout the Cold War, the Western powers emphasised the importance of presenting a unified

⁷⁴ See NAA: A1838, 262/12/8/1 Parts 1–3, correspondence, various dates.

⁷⁵ NAA: A1838, 262/12/8/1 Part 1, note with handwritten contributions from various External Affairs officials, 25–29 October 1962, attached to inward cablegram (I.26445), Australian Embassy, The Hague, to External Affairs, 24 October 1962.

front in the fight against communist expansionism. In his memoir in 1960, former British Prime Minister Eden wrote:

The West has a common faith and a common philosophy; it must express both, in thought and action everywhere and always. The interests of allies cannot be regarded as vital in one area and expendable in another, without danger to the whole structure of the alliance. There must be the same unity of purpose and action in a cold war as in a hot. Failure to observe this obligation has resulted in great gains to the communist powers in these post-war years.⁷⁶

For Australia, it was essential that it stood firm with the US, its most important ally, to ensure its own protection and that of the alliance. Given that all states are concerned with the maintenance of international peace and security, the UN in New York was a forum in which such a unified front could be displayed. Naturally, it was a hive of activity during the Cuban Crisis. As shown below, the Australian delegation, especially Plimsoll, played an active part at the UN as the crisis unfolded by attempting to garner support from member states for the US resolution should the matter go before the General Assembly.

Plimsoll led Australia's delegation to the UN in New York from 1959-63. While this was a challenging period for the UN, according to Plimsoll's biographer Jeremy Hearder, this was "The Highlight of His Career."⁷⁷ One US official considered Plimsoll

⁷⁶ Eden, *The Memoirs of the Rt. Hon. Sir Anthony Eden K.G., P.C., M.C.*, 580.

⁷⁷ Jeremy Hearder, *Jim Plim: Ambassador Extraordinary: A Biography of Sir James Plimsoll* (Ballarat, Victoria: Connor Court Publishing, 2015), ch.5. See also Jeremy Hearder, "Sir James Plimsoll: Mandarin Abroad," in *The Seven Dwarfs and the Age of the Mandarins: Australian Government Administration in the Post-War Reconstruction Era*, Samuel Furphy, ed. E-book (Canberra: Australian National University Press, 2015), 241–6. For an outline of the challenges facing the UN in this period and Australia's position on such issues, see Claire Clark, "Australia in the United Nations," in *Australian Foreign Policy: Towards a Reassessment*, Claire Clark, ed. (North Melbourne: Cassell Australia, 1973), 129–57.

“a real authority on the United Nations.”⁷⁸ Highly respected for his intelligence, deep interest in international affairs, work ethic, and the valuable contribution he made to Australia’s foreign policy and diplomatic service over 35 years,⁷⁹ Barwick described him as “one of our great diplomats.”⁸⁰ Kenneth Bailey, Secretary of the Attorney-General’s Department and Solicitor-General of the Commonwealth from 1946-64,⁸¹ knew of the Minister’s affection for Plimsoll having referred to Barwick as Plimsoll’s “warm admirer.”⁸² In terms of his relationship with Menzies, Plimsoll felt that his long sojourn in Canberra before travelling to New York had enabled him to develop “some understanding of the Prime Minister’s mind.” He also had a great working relationship with other UN permanent representatives, regardless of political orientation.⁸³

Plimsoll’s conversation with South African Foreign Minister, Eric Louw, on the morning of 23 October 1962 is a vivid example of his efforts to garner support for the American UN resolution. At that time, South Africa’s position on the crisis was not yet known. Louw had approached Plimsoll to discuss the Cuban situation prior to speaking with anyone else and had requested that their discussion remain “very confidential.” In

⁷⁸ Marshall Green interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy, 13 December 1988 (initial interview date), transcript, Foreign Affairs Oral History Collection, <http://adst.org/wpcontent/uploads/2012/09/Green-Marshall.pdf> (accessed 22 July 2015), 119.

⁷⁹ See, for example, Robert O’Neill, “The Launch of *Jim Plim* by Jeremy Hearder” (book launch at the Australian Institute of International Affairs (NSW branch), The Glover Cottages, Sydney, 16 June 2015), transcript, <http://www.internationalaffairs.org.au/jim-plim-ambassador-extraordinary/> (accessed 15 July 2015), 2–3; and foreword, Alexander Downer, Minister for Foreign Affairs from 1996-2007 in Hearder, *Jim Plim*, viii.

⁸⁰ Garfield Barwick, *A Radical Tory: Garfield Barwick’s Reflections and Recollections* (Sydney: The Federation Press, 1995), 162.

⁸¹ Jack E. Richardson, “Bailey, Sir Kenneth Hamilton (1898–1972),” Australian Dictionary of Biography, National Centre of Biography, Australian National University (ANU), <http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/bailey-sir-kenneth-hamilton-9404> (published in hardcopy 1993; accessed online 17 December 2014).

⁸² NAA: M1505, 1009, personal letter from Bailey to Plimsoll, 18 March 1962.

⁸³ Hearder, *Jim Plim*, 126 and 140.

a cablegram sent to External Affairs in Canberra and classified “secret,” Plimsoll provided a detailed account of Louw’s “considerable misgivings” about President Kennedy’s national address. Plimsoll also comprehensively described the arguments he had made in an effort to change the Foreign Minister’s mind.⁸⁴ Louw told Plimsoll that South Africa had consistently opposed communist aggression, but he did not believe that delivering arms to another state was tantamount to aggression. The US, he noted, was doing this around the world with its bases in, for example, the UK and Western Europe, to whom it also supplied arms. Plimsoll emphasised that the weapons in the Cuban situation were “offensive missiles bringing within range Washington, New York, Cape Canaveral and a large part of the industrial complex of the United States.” He also told Louw:

I did not think it was logical to equate apparently similar actions by different countries in different parts of the world. It was not valid to say that because the United States was doing something in one place the Soviet Union could do it somewhere [*sic*] else. We had to look at the total world picture and recognize that there was a delicate balance of power in the world as a whole which was made up of disparate elements on each side. Anything which upset this delicate balance by radically altering a single major element was like a stone setting off an avalanche and constituted a danger to world security.⁸⁵

In essence, Plimsoll argued that by placing missiles in Cuba, the Soviet Union had altered the strategic nuclear balance. Plimsoll was drawing on the national address of President Kennedy, who had made much of the Soviet Union’s statement on 11 September 1962, specifically:

⁸⁴ NAA: A1838, 262/12/8/1 Part 1, inward cablegram (I.26386), James Plimsoll, Australian Mission to United Nations, New York to External Affairs, 23 October 1962, 1–2.

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, 1.

that ‘the armaments and military equipment sent to Cuba are designed exclusively for defensive purposes’, that ‘there is no need for the Soviet Union to shift its weapons...for a retaliatory blow to any other country, for instance Cuba’, and that ‘the Soviet Union has so powerful rockets to carry these nuclear warheads that there is no need to search for sites for them beyond the boundaries of the Soviet Union.’ That statement was false.⁸⁶

In doing so, the Soviet Union’s actions, according to Kennedy, prompted “a deliberately provocative and unjustified change in the status quo.” The President also noted:

Nuclear weapons are so destructive, and ballistic missiles are so swift, that any substantially increased possibility of their use or any sudden change in their deployment may well be regarded as a definite threat to the peace.⁸⁷

Clearly, Plimsoll put forward these arguments from the President’s address to Louw in an effort to garner support for the US position on the crisis. Interestingly, Kennedy’s broadcast was the only occasion that year that Plimsoll had watched television.⁸⁸

Only hours before Kennedy’s address, National Security adviser McGeorge Bundy insisted that the President “reassure the European allies that the American response in Cuba was primarily aimed at protecting Berlin and reinforcing European security.” The President agreed that these were good points that the US had not emphasised enough in its communications with heads of state; Kennedy instructed that ambassadorial and diplomatic briefings “should stress America’s credibility on Berlin and the preservation of the strategic balance.” He reasoned that he wanted North Atlantic Treaty

⁸⁶ John F. Kennedy Presidential Library and Museum (JFK Library): Papers of John F. Kennedy, Presidential Papers, President's Office Files, Speech Files, JFKPOF-041-018, “Radio and television report to the American people on the Soviet arms build-up in Cuba, 22 October 1962,” <http://www.jfklibrary.org/Asset-Viewer/Archives/JFKPOF-041-018.aspx> (accessed 3 August 2015), 1–2.

⁸⁷ Ibid., 2.

⁸⁸ Hearder, *Jim Plim*, 145.

Organization (NATO) allies to feel fully informed and consulted “so that they didn’t react to the blockade as a symptom of America’s Cuba fixation.”⁸⁹ Clearly, the same points—especially the importance of preserving the strategic balance—were made to, and propagated by, Australian officials, as evidenced by Plimsoll’s conversation with Louw.

However, at the time of the crisis, Kennedy and several of his advisers *privately* held the view that the presence of Soviet missiles in Cuba had not entirely altered the strategic balance. Sheldon Stern, historian at the John F. Kennedy Presidential Library and Museum (JFK Library) from 1977–99,⁹⁰ demonstrated this in his ground-breaking analysis of the ExComm tapes—Kennedy’s secret recordings of the ExComm meetings, which were gradually declassified during Stern’s time at the JFK Library.⁹¹ At an ExComm meeting on 16 October 1962—the day Kennedy was informed of the Soviet missiles in Cuba—Bundy questioned the strategic importance of the missile deployment. Mindful of the position the US had already taken publicly on the Soviet build-up in Cuba, Bundy stated:

⁸⁹ Sheldon M. Stern, *The Cuban Missile Crisis in American Memory: Myths versus Reality* (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 2012), 90. Regarding the US attitude to Cuba, Kennedy stated that most of the allies “think that we’re slightly demented on this subject”: *ibid.*, 47.

⁹⁰ “Sheldon M. Stern,” Thomas B. Fordham Institute: Advancing Educational Excellence, <http://edexcellence.net/about-us/fordham-staff/sheldon-m-stern> (accessed 4 May 2016).

⁹¹ “The JFK White House Tape Recordings,” JFK Library, <https://www.jfklibrary.org/JFK/JFK-in-History/White-House-Tape-Recordings.aspx> (accessed 28 August 2017).

quite aside from what we've said and we're very hard-locked on to it, I know: what is the strategic impact on the position of the United States of MRBMs [medium-range ballistic missiles] in Cuba? How gravely does this change [...] the strategic balance?⁹²

US Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara responded that he did not think the Soviet missile deployment to Cuba had altered the strategic balance, a view he noted that was in opposition to that of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. Their Chairman, General Maxwell D. Taylor, acknowledged that the missiles may have psychological and political significance in addition to military, to which Bundy replied with a cynical laugh, "Oh [...] I asked the question with an awareness [of the political picture]."⁹³ Kennedy also had told ExComm on 16 October:

It doesn't make any difference [...] if you get blown up by an ICBM [intercontinental ballistic missile] flying from the Soviet Union or one that was ninety miles away. Geography doesn't mean that much...After all this is a political struggle as much as military.⁹⁴

As discussed earlier in this chapter, geography was of little relevance in the thermonuclear age; this was a concept the US President clearly understood. While there were political as well as military implications regarding the strategic balance of states, it was the result of a missile launch, more so than the location of its launchpad, that was of greater import.

Even though the President and some of his key advisers did not think the strategic balance had changed, a week later, the Administration crafted a statement for the

⁹² Stern, *The Cuban Missile Crisis in American Memory*, 86. Bundy knocked on the table for emphasis as he said the words "strategic balance."

⁹³ Ibid.

⁹⁴ Ibid., 21.

American people and the rest of the world that claimed the opposite. What is noteworthy in terms of Australia's crisis experience is that Plimsoll was persuaded by, and propagated, such claims. This is despite technological developments in nuclear weapons and the superiority of the US arsenal being well-known.⁹⁵ Awareness of nuclear weapons technology and the capabilities of the US arsenal inform understandings of strategic balance. Plimsoll's attempt to convince Louw that there had been a change in the strategic balance demonstrates the Australian Ambassador's naiveté about US strategic claims and his limited understanding of advances in nuclear weapons technology.

After submitting to Louw these arguments about strategic balance, Plimsoll gave the Foreign Minister a copy of Menzies' parliamentary statement. Louw then asked Plimsoll whether, if the crisis escalated to world war, "Australia would be in it boots and all with the United States."⁹⁶ Plimsoll responded in the affirmative:

⁹⁵ See Desmond Ball, "The Strategic Missile Programme of the Kennedy Administration, 1961–1963," (PhD diss., Australian National University, 1972).

⁹⁶ NAA: A1838, 262/12/8/1 Part 1, inward cablegram (I.26386), Plimsoll to External Affairs, 23 October 1962, 2. The phrase "boots and all" is a colloquialism defined as "completely; with all your strength or resources": *Macquarie Australian Slang Dictionary* (Macquarie University, New South Wales: The Macquarie Library, 2004), 25. That the South African Foreign Minister chose to use this phrase is unusual. It was a favourite expression of Australia's Labor Prime Minister from 1945–49, Ben Chifley: D. B. Waterson, "Chifley, Joseph Benedict (Ben) (1885–1951)," *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, National Centre of Biography, ANU, <http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/chifley-joseph-benedict-ben-9738> (published in hardcopy 1993; accessed online 5 May 2016). The Australian press regularly employed the phrase in its coverage of major issues of his prime ministership, such as bank nationalisation and the coal miner's strike. See, for example, "Boots And All!" (cartoon), *Sunday Times* (Perth), 19 October 1947, 4; "Boots And All Chifley" (cartoon), *Tribune* (Sydney), 13 July 1949, 6; and "'Boots and All' Report: Fadden Describes Chifley's Talk as 'Plain Nonsense'," *Morning Bulletin* (Rockhampton, Queensland), 22 July 1949, 1.

Australia was wholly supporting the United States. Australia would take the view that anything that threatened the security of the United States or would make it hesitate to defend its allies would be a threat to our own security.⁹⁷

In essence, Plimsoll conveyed to Louw that the strategic and geo-political situation was such that Australia's commitment to the US was, indeed, "boots and all." Australia relied on the US to assist in its defence. Consequently, the successful management of the US alliance was of paramount importance to the Menzies Government. This thesis has shown, however, that the Menzies Government had a number of *private* concerns regarding the US handling of the crisis, and it argues that such concerns underscored its decision to pledge its support specifically for the American resolution in the UN on the crisis. Plimsoll's expression of Australia's support for the US, therefore, was seemingly greater than officials in Canberra intended.

In terms of the legality of the quarantine, discussed in Chapter 4, Plimsoll was also more forthright in his views than officials in Canberra. While Plimsoll was in agreement with the Department of External Affairs that the US could rely on the Organization of American States' (OAS) endorsement of the quarantine in the absence of UN approval, he noted: "In the last resort, however, we would have to maintain that irrespective of legality the United States and other American countries are acting in this way from the simple motive of survival."⁹⁸ In other words, American actions under the threat of nuclear war trumped principles of international law. While Plimsoll was instructed to do

⁹⁷ NAA: A1838, 262/12/8/1 Part 1, inward cablegram (I.26386), Plimsoll to External Affairs, 23 October 1962, 2.

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, 1.

“all in his power” to support the American UN resolution, his comments departed from Canberra’s more cautious response.

On 30 October 1962, Plimsoll disclosed (in-confidence) to the American UN delegation Australian anxieties regarding the quarantine. This was despite the efforts of Prime Minister Menzies and other Canberra officials to exclude such anxieties from its public statements and private communications with US officials. Adlai Stevenson, the US Permanent Representative to the UN, subsequently informed US Secretary of State, Dean Rusk:

Australian Cabinet in recent days had been concerned by, and given serious consideration to, long term effects of US quarantine of Cuba as precedent on Australia which is an island nation. The Australian Government had ‘of course’ not wanted to complicate the matter by raising this in any way with us.⁹⁹

Stevenson was correct: the Australian Government had never intended to raise such anxieties with the US. Plimsoll, however, obviously considered it necessary to draw American attention to these concerns, specifically the issue of precedent and the effect this could potentially have on Australia’s geo-strategic interests. Nevertheless, Plimsoll seems to have made this disclosure in such a way that it demonstrated Australia’s faithfulness as a US ally. Plimsoll did not disclose the Government’s concerns until 30 October, and when he did so, he was discreet. This was likely to avoid any doubt being cast on the extent of Australia’s support at the height of the crisis, and consequently, the strength and solidarity of the Western and Australia-US alliances.

⁹⁹ National Archives and Records Administration, College Park, Maryland, US (NARA): RG59, CDF, 1960–63, Box 1682 (NND 949524), 743.00/6–762, airgram (A-611), Stevenson to Rusk, 30 October 1962. This airgram can also be found in RG59, CDF, 1960–63, Box 1335 (NND 949599), 643.00/7–2860.

It is worth noting that officials in Canberra seemingly were unaware of Plimsoll's disclosure to Stevenson and the latter's communique to Rusk. Such evidence was found among declassified US government records held at the National Archives and Records Administration, College Park, Maryland (NARA). No records have been located in Australian archives authored by Plimsoll or any other official that demonstrates that those in Canberra were aware that such information had been shared.

This disclosure is a clear example of Plimsoll exercising his own judgement in implementing Australian foreign policy. Interestingly, some officials were aware that Plimsoll occasionally acted independently. According to the Minister for Foreign Affairs from 1996-2007, Alexander Downer, who had worked for Plimsoll in Brussels as his Third Secretary:

There were times when Plimsoll would judge the instructions coming from Canberra as so futile he would not carry them out. This did not mean he would ignore the government's policy objectives. It did mean, though, that if he thought the government's tactics to achieve its goals were foolish, he would gently bury them.¹⁰⁰

Plimsoll evidently took such an approach during the Cuban Crisis. Moreover, it appears that while External Affairs had made their anxieties plain in their cablegrams to the Permanent Representative, Plimsoll took the instruction to "do all in his power" literally. This is demonstrated by his conversation with the South African Foreign Minister that Australia was in the crisis "boots and all" with the US, and his disclosure to Stevenson regarding Australia's concerns about the precedent set by the quarantine.

¹⁰⁰ Hearder, *Jim Plim*, viii-ix.

Plimsoll's behaviour suggests that, in light of Downer's comment, he considered the Government's "tactics" to support the American UN resolution as "foolish." His actions indicate that he thought Australia needed to be more forthright in demonstrating its unequivocal support for the US in an effort to successfully manage the Australia-US alliance. While arguably Plimsoll went further than Canberra intended, seemingly, he did so to facilitate the Government's policy objectives.

One scholar has claimed that the Australian Government's inclusion of the UN in its policy on the Cuban Crisis reflects Prime Minister Menzies' greater appreciation for the Organization. In his study on Australia and UN reform, Roderic Pitty discussed the Menzies Government's support in the early 1960s for modestly expanding the non-permanent membership of the UN Security Council. Decolonisation saw many newly independent states join the UN in the 1950s and 1960s, which had a dramatic effect on the character and composition of the General Assembly. By 1963, developing states formed the majority in the General Assembly, and there was increased pressure to expand the number of non-permanent members of the Security Council from six to 10. On 17 December 1963, Australia supported this change by way of Resolution 1991A, even though this brought to an end the convention of Commonwealth states having a reserved seat on the Security Council.¹⁰¹ Pitty argued that this demonstrated that "in the context of a United Nations transformed by decolonisation," a more representative

¹⁰¹ While the General Assembly vote passed in 1963, the membership of the Security Council could only be changed by amending the UN Charter. This required ratification by all of the permanent members of the Security Council and two-thirds of the General Assembly. Eventually this occurred and elections for non-permanent seats took place in 1965: Roderic Pitty, "Australia and UN reform," in *Australia and the United Nations*, James Cotton and David Lee, eds. (Canberra: Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Australian Government, 2012), 384, 386 and 388–9. For more on the number of Afro-Asian states that joined the UN between 1950 and 1972 and the effect this had on voting in the General Assembly, see Clark, "Australia in the United Nations," 137–8.

Security Council was of greater importance to Australia than the preservation of a Commonwealth seat. Pitty suggested that Australia's support for this reform, while significant, was not necessarily unexpected; there were signs of change in Australia's attitude towards decolonisation and the UN:

Although Australia had adopted an 'unnecessarily legalistic' view in refusing to support anti-colonial resolutions at the United Nations because of the phrasing of a single clause, there had been some change in Australian voting on such issues between 1961 and 1963.¹⁰²

To further illustrate his point, Pitty stated that Menzies had "expressed a new appreciation of the United Nations during the Cuban Missile Crisis in October 1962."¹⁰³

The source of his claim was a newspaper article published on 30 October 1962 in the *Sydney Morning Herald*.¹⁰⁴

The political correspondent, who had written the article, made much of the fact that Menzies and Calwell had each expressed to Parliament their hope that the crisis would be resolved in the UN. While Calwell's "expression of confidence in the United Nations" was seen as predictable, "Menzies' equally definite recognition of that body as the world's main hope of averting the tragedy of a nuclear war" was considered surprising. The reason, the correspondent claimed, was that during the 1950s, Menzies

¹⁰² Ibid., 389. On the quote "unnecessarily legalistic," Pitty cited Clark, "Australia in the United Nations," 139. According to Clark, Australia (under a Liberal government) would reject a resolution over the wording of a single clause "even if the general tenor of the resolution was acceptable." It was decided at ministerial level in 1971 to change this approach; the Australian UN representative could support a resolution that otherwise would have been opposed on legalistic grounds, if its general tenor conformed with government policy: *ibid.*, 153.

¹⁰³ Pitty, "Australia and UN reform," 389.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid., 488. This was the only reference Pitty made to the crisis. For the article, see "Canberra Commentary: Prime Minister's Better Appreciation Of U.N.," *Sydney Morning Herald*, 30 October 1962, 2.

and his Ministers derided H.V. Evatt for his efforts to seek UN action in response to world crises, the PM “sneering” repeatedly at the Organization.¹⁰⁵ Evatt was Leader of the Australian Labor Party (ALP) and Opposition from 1951 to 1960. He had played an active part in the establishment of the UN and had energetically placed Australia on the international stage as Attorney-General and Minister for External Affairs from 1941 to 1949 under the Curtin and Chifley Governments.¹⁰⁶ The correspondent concluded that as Evatt had left Parliament, “Menzies has obviously changed his tune and would probably prefer all his old sneers to be buried and forgotten.”¹⁰⁷ In essence, the correspondent believed that Menzies’ announcement of Australia’s policy on the Cuban Crisis in Parliament on 23 October 1962 reflected newfound personal appreciation for the UN, a position he could now take in Evatt’s absence. Pitty, in citing this article, perpetuated this claim and used it to intimate that Menzies’ greater appreciation for the UN reflected Australia’s openness to UN reform. However, as shown below, the correspondent was mistaken in his conclusions, and consequently, Pitty’s reference to those views is misleading.

The Australian Government’s support for the American UN resolution offers no basis on which to revise Menzies’ well-known contempt and distrust for the Organization. In the late 1940s, Menzies and his Liberal-Country Party colleagues in Opposition, repeatedly lambasted the Labor Government, accusing it of, for example, “revolutionising

¹⁰⁵ “Canberra Commentary: Prime Minister’s Better Appreciation Of U.N.,” *Sydney Morning Herald*, 30 October 1962, 2.

¹⁰⁶ G. C. Bolton, “Evatt, Herbert Vere (Bert) (1894–1965),” Australian Dictionary of Biography, National Centre of Biography, ANU, <http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/evatt-herbert-vere-bert-10131> (published in hardcopy 1996; accessed online 29 April 2016).

¹⁰⁷ “Canberra Commentary: Prime Minister’s Better Appreciation Of U.N.,” *Sydney Morning Herald*, 30 October 1962, 2.

Australian foreign policy through misplaced faith in the new United Nations.” The Coalition contended that the Government was meddling in the array of disputes facing the General Assembly instead of accepting the Cold War and cementing Australia’s alliances with the UK and the US.¹⁰⁸ Once the Coalition was in government, negative experiences for Menzies involving the UN resulting from the Suez Crisis in 1956 and the U2 Affair in 1960, fostered his personal lack of enthusiasm for the Organization.

In what is considered the first detailed history of Australian foreign policy,¹⁰⁹ Alan Watt, Australian diplomat and Secretary to the Department of External Affairs from 1950–54, wrote that Menzies’ “intellectual distrust of paper constitutions and international organisations such as the United Nations,” was a factor that clouded his judgement on the Suez Crisis.¹¹⁰

In May 1960, the Soviets discovered and shot down an American U2 spy plane in their airspace. The incident provoked enormous tension between the two superpowers, culminating in the collapse of the Paris Summit a fortnight later. After the UN session began in September, the US approached Menzies to appear before the General Assembly to dissuade calls for the US and Soviet Union to meet again. Following the Paris Summit, US President Dwight D. Eisenhower did not want to meet with Soviet

¹⁰⁸ David Lowe, *Menzies and the ‘Great World Struggle’: Australia’s Cold War, 1948–1954* (Sydney: University of New South Wales Press, 1999), 19–20.

¹⁰⁹ David Lowe, *Percy Spender and the American Century*, The Trevor Reese Memorial Lecture, Carl Bridge, series ed. (London: Menzies Centre for Australian Studies, King’s College London, 2002), 1.

¹¹⁰ Alan Watt, *The Evolution of Australian Foreign Policy 1938–1965* (London: Cambridge University Press, 1967), 306–7.

Premier Nikita Khrushchev. Menzies obliged, and with the agreement of the US and UK, proposed an amendment that any summit involve the “Big Four,” thereby avoiding a confrontation between the superpowers. According to Australian Ambassador to the US from 1958–64, Howard Beale, Menzies’ amendment was “overwhelmingly lost.” It obtained few votes and seemingly, the US and the UK—which had helped mastermind it—had done little to garner support for it. It also drew a strong personal attack from Indian Prime Minister, Jawaharlal Nehru, whose proposal Menzies had amended.¹¹¹ Menzies’ first visit to the UN was, as Beale so delicately put it in his memoir, “an unpleasant episode.” Consequently, the PM “left the United Nations with no high opinion of that body as an impartial deliberative assembly.”¹¹² Two years later, Menzies declared his views on the UN in Parliament.

In a debate in March 1962 following Barwick’s ministerial statement on the West New Guinea dispute, Leader of the Opposition and the ALP, Arthur Calwell, accused the Government of having “failed to take the initiative in the United Nations to uphold the principles of the Charter” and garner support “for the principle of self-determination for the people of West New Guinea,” especially from the US and the UK. Calwell also had stated that “The Labour Party’s [*sic*] policy is unswerving loyalty to the United Nations. That, of course, means unswerving loyalty to the ideals of the United Nations, not to power blocs, vetoes and log-rolling campaigns by interested parties.” This was a “trap,” he claimed, into which the Government had fallen. “It has no independent voice; it

¹¹¹ Howard Beale, *This Inch of Time: Memoirs of Politics and Diplomacy* (Carlton, Victoria: Melbourne University Press, 1977), 138–41.

¹¹² *Ibid.*, 141.

merely supports the strength.”¹¹³ In light of his UN experience, Menzies responded by suggesting that the ALP had no real sense of realpolitik and the inner workings and procedures of the Organization, and that he was dissatisfied with its effectiveness:

The only answer that comes up in the speech of the Leader of the Opposition as repetitively as the beat of a metronome is, "The United Nations". Does not the honorable [*sic*] gentleman know that this matter has been before the United Nations? Does he not know that if this matter were taken to the Security Council a dozen times the Soviet Union would veto whatever view was taken? Does he not know that this matter has been the subject of resolution after resolution in the General Assembly?¹¹⁴

Consequently, Menzies considered Australia's management of its alliances with the US and the UK of greater importance than general support for the UN. The PM concluded:

This idea of transferring your burden to the United Nations is no policy at all. It becomes worse than no policy at all—if, as the honorable [*sic*] gentleman did, one sets about jeering at what he calls the power blocs and log-rolling campaigns by interested parties. Of course, honorable [*sic*] members will understand that that is a reference to our old-fashioned belief that, when it comes to peace or war in this part of the world, where Great Britain and the United States stand is of vital moment to this country. According to honorable [*sic*] members opposite this is old-fashioned stuff. In their view we should not be interested in what he describes as power blocs. Thank God, we have a power bloc in the world! It will be a poor day for Australia if, in the name of some theoretical idea about the United Nations, we abandon our lines of communication with, to repeat my own phrase, our great and powerful friends. No country in the world more than ours needs great and powerful friends. I am all for them. I believe that the people of Australia are for them, and I believe that any policy pursued by us which would put at risk our friendship with those countries would be rejected by every sensible person in the country.¹¹⁵

Thus, just seven months before the Cuban Crisis, Menzies continued to demonstrate a lack of enthusiasm for the UN. He was certainly not going to risk Australia's alliances

¹¹³ Arthur Calwell, CPD, House, vol. 35, 29 March 1962, 1154 and 1161.

¹¹⁴ R.G. Menzies, *ibid.*, 1163.

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 1163–4.

with its major allies for unequivocal support for an Organization whose effectiveness he doubted.

There is no evidence to suggest that Menzies had grown fonder of the UN by the onset of the Cuban Crisis. Menzies made only four references to the UN in Parliament during the crisis. The first three are found in his parliamentary statement of 23 October 1962. In that statement, as has been noted earlier, the PM expressed his appreciation for President Kennedy's reference in his national address to "the vital importance of regional defensive agreements—agreements which are authorized by the United Nations Charter and which are necessary for the common safety of those living within the region." He also stated: "We welcome the readiness of the United States of America to bring the matter promptly before the United Nations." Menzies then stipulated that the US would request an urgent meeting of the UN Security Council where it would table its resolution, which Plimsoll had been instructed to support even though he did not sit on the Security Council.¹¹⁶ The only other occasion during the crisis when Menzies referred to the UN was on 25 October 1962. J. F. Cairns, who was concerned about the implications of the quarantine, asked Menzies:

Will he consider associating Australia with action taken in the United Nations and elsewhere, directed to the vital task of preventing a clash between American and Russian ships in the vicinity of Cuba? Further, will he support similar action to remove what both Cuba and the United States consider to be threats to their security?¹¹⁷

¹¹⁶ Menzies, CPD, House, vol. 37, 23 October 1962, 1780–1.

¹¹⁷ Cairns, *ibid.*, 25 October 1962, 1940.

Menzies responded that he thought he had already declared the Government's policy.

He stated that the American UN resolution

is one eminently calculated to relieve this tension. It puts the onus, it is true, on the other people to dismantle these offensive weapons and to refrain from supplying them, but it also states that if this is done, the quarantine measures adopted could be lifted and should be lifted, and that the whole matter should be dealt with under United Nations supervision. That seems to us to be a method admirably within the spirit of the charter and admirably consistent with the general policy of the Government.¹¹⁸

In his reply, Menzies simply reiterated and expanded on his parliamentary statement. It is important to note that Cairns had asked Menzies to comment on the action taken in the UN regarding the Cuban Crisis. In other words, the PM had not volunteered to speak on the subject. Thus, the *Sydney Morning Herald* political correspondent conflated Menzies' announcement of the Government's policy on the Cuban Crisis, and his response to a parliamentary question on the subject, with a new and more favourable personal stance on the UN. Clearly, there is no evidence to suggest that the PM had a "better appreciation" of the Organization.

On one level, the Australian Government's support for the American UN resolution was unsurprising. Throughout the 1950s and 1960s, Australia—mostly under the prime ministership of Menzies—voted with the Western powers at the UN on all significant Cold War matters. This included draft resolutions submitted by the Soviet bloc in the early 1960s regarding Cuban grievances against the US.¹¹⁹ In that sense, Australia's

¹¹⁸ Menzies, *ibid.*

¹¹⁹ Clark, "Australia in the United Nations," 140. Australia also consistently voted with the Western powers throughout the 1940s except on an international regime for Jerusalem and the General Assembly's consideration of a declaration on human rights: *ibid.*, 135.

support for the US resolution on the Cuban Crisis was consistent with its voting behaviour in this period. Therefore, Australia's support for the Western powers in the UN, specifically, its desire to maintain Western alliance unity and its strong ties to its "great and powerful friends," reflects the influence of key policy factors discussed in this thesis, more so than a newfound personal commitment to the UN.

Any noticeable shift in the Menzies Government's attitude towards the UN was not necessarily a result of Evatt's departure from Parliament, as much as it was Garfield Barwick's arrival, particularly during his tenure as Minister for External Affairs from 1961–64. According to Clark, Australia's voting behaviour at the UN underwent "a brief change" from 1961 to 1963. Australia went from abstaining on resolutions regarding colonialism and territories to voting in favour of questions on the same subjects. Clark did not offer an explanation for this change.¹²⁰ The most likely explanation is Barwick's influence as Minister for External Affairs in this period. Barwick's fresh approach to Australian foreign policy, as evidenced by his involvement in helping shift the Government's policy on the West New Guinea dispute outlined in Chapter 2, correlates with Australia's changing attitude on matters relating to colonialism and territories. That Australia reverted back to its old voting behaviour in the mid-1960s¹²¹ gives credence to this theory; Barwick left Parliament for the High Court in 1964 and no longer shaped Australia's role in international affairs. It was Barwick who, with the support of his Department, led and managed the Australian response to the Cuban Crisis, emphasising the role of the UN.

¹²⁰ Ibid., 145.

¹²¹ Ibid.

The Menzies Government's second parliamentary statement on the Cuban Crisis, which was delivered by Barwick and detailed earlier in this chapter, clearly demonstrates the Minister's appreciation for the UN. Unlike the Government's first statement that, as was shown in Chapters 1 and 2, was prepared and delivered by the PM, significantly, it was the Department of External Affairs and the Minister that drafted and gave the second statement, respectively.¹²² Barwick, unlike Menzies, was keen for Australia to play an active and constructive role in the affairs of the UN. Clark wrote in 1973 that

The challenge for the Government of a democracy which, quite properly, must be accountable for its actions in the United Nations, is to explain the complexity and consequently the slowness of decision-making on many issues of substance and to clarify the significance of those issues. In Australia this is especially necessary, given widespread doubts about the usefulness of the Organization.¹²³

During the Cuban Crisis, Barwick was asked in Parliament about the resolutions that had been tabled in the UN Security Council. Barwick responded that he would table all of the key UN documents on the crisis in Parliament.¹²⁴ He later advised that he would place them in the library for MPs to view.¹²⁵ These documents formed a two-volume dossier titled *Documents on Cuba*.¹²⁶ By making these documents available and providing a summary of events in his parliamentary statement, External Affairs had tried to make the crisis more accessible to MPs by demystifying its complexity in terms of the way in which it was unfolding at the UN. Barwick and the Department had also attempted to show the UN in a positive light, in terms of its handling of a crisis. This open collaboration among the Minister and the Department, however, would end with

¹²² Barwick, CPD, House, vol. 37, 6 November 1962, 2050.

¹²³ Clark, "Australia in the United Nations," 155.

¹²⁴ Calwell and Barwick, House, CPD, vol. 37, 25 October 1962, 1933.

¹²⁵ Barwick, *ibid.*, 2041.

¹²⁶ *Documents on Cuba*, vols. 1 (22–25 October 1962) and 2 (24 October–5 November 1962) (Department of External Affairs: Canberra, 1962).

Barwick's tenure. It would fade away, much like the Cuban Crisis did for Australians. Having first heard about the Cuban Crisis on Tuesday morning, by the following Monday, Australians were waking-up to news that the most tense period of the crisis was over. The Cuban Crisis had ended as quickly as it had begun.

Conclusion

Fifty-five years ago, the US and the Soviet Union stood on the brink of nuclear war over Soviet missiles in Cuba. Since then, the Cuban Missile Crisis has been recognised as a defining moment in the twentieth century. In the past twenty years, declassified government records have revealed indeed how close the parties came to nuclear conflict. The declassification of records belonging to other foreign governments and the subsequent research undertaken on state responses to the Cuban Crisis, as outlined in the Introduction, have generated a wave of studies that has revealed the truly global nature of the Cuban Crisis. It seems remarkable, given the abundance of literature on the crisis, that still more could be written on this subject. As files continue to be declassified around the world, scholars are discovering new information and re-evaluating earlier understandings of this event. Australia's policy response to the crisis, which has not, until now, received detailed examination, makes a significant contribution to this extensive scholarship on the crisis.

As a history and policy analysis, this thesis could not be understood without being placed in the context of examining Australia in the Cold War in the early 1960s. Much of that history, as noted in the Introduction, has not been written. In addition to addressing a historiographical gap on the Cuban Crisis, this thesis has therefore had to address historiographical gaps in the history of Australia's relationship with nuclear weapons and Australia-US and Australia-Cuba trade relations in order to explicate Australia's policy response. For that reason, the scope of this thesis has been narrowed

so that the Government's policy could be explained and placed in such a context. There are, nevertheless, avenues for further research, specifically on Australia and the crisis itself. For example, a broader examination of reactions to the crisis across the Australian community is warranted, including the reactions of political parties outside the Australian government.

This thesis has also concentrated on the Menzies Government's policy on the crisis in the context of the Australia-US alliance. This focus is validated by the central part that the US played in the crisis, and the fact that the US alliance was, at this time, the most significant diplomatic relationship for Australia in terms of its geo-strategic and geo-political interests. The British influence, while still important, had waned. That the Menzies Government sought the British reaction to the crisis but determined its policy unaware of such views, is testament to this evolution in Australian-British relations. That said, a separate study on the changing relationship between Australia and the UK in the context of the Cuban Crisis that, for example, examined in detail the correspondence between Menzies and Macmillan, is a topic suitable for further study. Research for this thesis has also revealed useful sources on the reactions of the Australian population, such as the views on the crisis of trade unions and peace organisations. Although excluded from this thesis for the lack of influence these organisations had on the Menzies Government's policy formulation and implementation, they are worthy of further research, particularly in terms of expanding the existing scholarship on Australian anti-nuclear activism and the peace movement.

On 23 October 1962, Prime Minister Menzies addressed Parliament on the Cuban Crisis. He welcomed the decision of the US to bring the matter before the UN and pledged Australia's support for the American resolution to be tabled in the Security Council. Chapter 1 showed that Menzies delivered his parliamentary statement with little advance notice of the Cuban situation and with limited information regarding the Kennedy Administration's initial plan of action. Australian intelligence agencies were informed of the situation as a result of intelligence cooperation arrangements that existed between Australia and the US. The nature of this cooperation during the crisis was brought to light in this thesis through oral histories and correspondence with former military intelligence officials. While this chapter demonstrated the closeness of the Australia-US alliance in this regard, the nature and amount of information shared could not be ascertained; a cloak of secrecy still surrounds such records. This chapter also corrected Prue Torney-Parlicki's claims that Australia had significant advance notice of the crisis. In fact, the Australian Embassy in Washington, D.C. and therefore the Department of External Affairs, was aware that the British and Canadians were better informed. However, officials in the Department of Prime Minister were less cognisant of Australia's lack of advance notice.

Even though Menzies received a personal message from President Kennedy and an advance copy of his address, for the Prime Minister and Australian officials in Canberra and Washington, Kennedy's broadcast on 22 October (US Eastern Standard Time) was a critical source of information, particularly in terms of the Administration's initial, seven-step response. Officials, and many in the general public, listened to the President

via Voice of America. His address, and Menzies' parliamentary statement that shortly followed, were reported in Australia's daily metropolitan newspapers, most reproducing the leaders' statements in their entirety. Unlike the US and the UK where the Cuban Crisis was a television crisis, as Chapter 1 showed, Australians heard about the crisis on the radio and read about it in the newspapers. Access to news media and the frequency of reporting varied across Australia, but it was nonetheless plentiful and informative.

Shortly after President Kennedy's address, the Australian Cabinet met and deliberated on the Cuban Crisis. It was the first agenda item for discussion at a meeting that had already been scheduled. In its initial discussion of the crisis, the Cabinet formulated a policy on the matter. Chapter 2 examined the Cabinet's discussions in detail. The Cabinet Notebook demonstrated that it was the Minister for External Affairs, Garfield Barwick, who led the discussion and he, along with External Affairs, would continue to take the lead in managing Australia's policy response to the crisis. Barwick's leadership in Cabinet contrasts with the literature on Menzies' behaviour in Cabinet. The PM did not dominate the ministers with his views nor did he demonstrate brilliance on the matter. Nevertheless, he consulted Cabinet on the crisis, which was also then noted in some Australian major daily newspapers. This is contrary to a claim that he did not do so, a claim communicated to the President the following year. The Kennedy Administration was thereby misinformed. The Menzies Government too had been given false impressions. It was advised by the US State Department that it was the first government to pledge support for the US. While Australia was indeed swift in pledging

its support, New Zealand was the first to do so publicly, and the British had privately communicated their support prior to Kennedy's address.

The Cabinet Notebook illustrates clearly that the US alliance was of paramount importance to the Cabinet in its formulation of Australia's policy on the crisis. It was careful to keep its policy narrow rather than prepare a detailed statement, but it nevertheless sought to demonstrate that its support for the US was unequivocal. The reasons for the Menzies Government's narrow yet unequivocal support for the US in the Cuban Crisis were explored in Chapters 3 to 5.

Chapter 3 studied Australia's policy response to the Cuban Crisis in the context of Australia's nuclear ambitions in this period. It demonstrated that some Australian officials were mindful of the potential effect the crisis could have on their interest in hosting US nuclear weapons on Australian soil. Australia was keen to secure American interest in Australia's region and enhance Australia's defence capabilities. But the Minister and Secretary of External Affairs, Garfield Barwick and Arthur Tange respectively, were acutely aware of the complexity and difficulties of this position. In effect, but not intent, Australian desires aligned with Cuban objectives. Just as Cuba wanted their ally's weapons on their soil, so did Australia. Barwick and Tange agreed that this could not interfere with the government's policy on the Cuban Crisis at the expense of the US alliance on which Australia so heavily relied for its defence. In explaining this position, it was necessary to provide a detailed background on

Australia's nuclear history in this period, an understudied subject. Much of this chapter therefore makes a new and important contribution to the historiography on Australia's relationship with nuclear weapons. This chapter illustrates that Australia's nuclear ambitions shaped its narrow policy response on the crisis.

This narrowness was also influenced by its uncertainty over its legal and ethical commitments to the US in the Cuban Crisis. Chapter 4 showed that External Affairs officials reviewed the relevance of the ANZUS Treaty to the crisis and were unclear as to its applicability. While they were mindful not to over-commit Australia to the Cuban situation, External Affairs officials concluded that it was best not to interpret the Treaty too narrowly in fear that the US would interpret the Treaty similarly in the future. As shown in Chapters 3 and 4, Australia relied on the support of the US to defend against regional communist threats. It was therefore in Australia's geo-strategic interests to successfully manage and maintain its alliance with the US.

The crisis however, posed major problems in this regard. Chapter 4 showed that External Affairs officials were concerned about whether the US could provide such defence assistance if it was pre-occupied on two fronts: Berlin and Cuba. The quarantine was also a cause for concern both in terms of its legality—it was in effect a blockade—and because of the precedent it set. For some Australian officials cognisant of Australia's nuclear ambitions, as detailed in Chapter 3, the latter point was highly problematic for Australia, an island nation.

US actions were also problematic in terms of Australia-Cuba trade. While Menzies questioned whether the Cabinet needed to take trade into consideration in formulating its policy on the Cuban Crisis, astonishingly, it did not do so. The Trade Minister advised the PM that Australia did not have any trade with Cuba. In fact, as shown in Chapter 5, it had a healthy trade relationship that had been a source of great tension in Australia-US relations. Although the Menzies Government did not support Fidel Castro in terms of his politics, unlike the Americans, Australia saw politics and economics as separate issues. Trade was an important factor that was noted and then overlooked during the Cuban Crisis, and consequently, it was not considered in the Government's formulation of its policy.

Chapter 6 examined the Menzies Government's implementation of its policy in the initial, most tense, days of the crisis. It showed the low nuclear threat perception held by Australian officials located in Canberra, compared with those at the UN in New York. Such threat perceptions affected civil defence planning and preparedness. It was on this issue that sections of the Australian community reacted most strongly regarding the crisis. There was also a strong response to the Government's new three-year defence plan, which it launched the day after news of the crisis broke in Australia. The Government was heavily criticised for the programme, which many claimed was inadequate for the defence of Australia. In the new programme and in its parliamentary statement, the Government emphasised the importance of collective defence, specifically the US alliance, a theme that underlines Australia's policy response to the Cuban Crisis.

Conversely, the Government was applauded for its approach towards the UN. Chapter 6 shows the difficult relationship Menzies had with the Organization. While Australia's policy on the Cuban Crisis did not demonstrate a new found appreciation for the UN as had been claimed, Barwick was more complimentary of the Organization. Throughout the crisis, Australia's Permanent Representative to the UN, James Plimsoll, worked feverishly to garner support for the US position. He was well-respected within the UN and had a close working relationship with the American delegation. Nevertheless, his expression of Australia's support for the US resolution, as shown in Chapter 6, was less contained than those in Canberra had indicated. Plimsoll even confidentially passed on the Cabinet's concerns to US Permanent Representative to the UN, Adlai Stevenson, without Canberra's knowledge.

While publicly Australia was perceived to be a faithful American ally, this thesis has argued that the Menzies Government's policy response to the Cuban Crisis was more calculated than the Prime Minister's parliamentary statement suggested, and the Kennedy Administration perceived. The thesis has revealed that the Menzies Government developed a narrow policy, carefully managed the US alliance in the light of Australia's defence needs, and in doing so, kept Australia's national interests in sharp focus.

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