

The World of Small States 6

Anne-Marie Brady *Editor*

Small States and the Changing Global Order

New Zealand Faces the Future

 Springer

The World of Small States

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New Zealand Faces the Future

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Earlier versions of many of these book chapters were trialled at a hui (conference) on New Zealand foreign policy at the University of Canterbury in June 2017, which was attended by senior policy analysts, academics, politicians and graduate students; as well as a wānanga (workshop) hosted by Ngāi Tahu at Rāpaki marae in September 2018. Many of the presentations at these events were written up as policy briefs, now available on the website of the SSANSE Project Pop-Up Think Tank. Some of the book’s authors have incorporated findings from their earlier publications in their chapters. Every effort has been made to contact copyright holders for their permission to reprint their materials in this book.

I am very grateful to Anthony L. Smith for his encouragement and support of this book project, including as one of the book chapter authors. I am also grateful to the

other authors of the book chapters for agreeing to share their knowledge in a way that would be useful for the New Zealand government and the people of Aotearoa New Zealand, as well as for the future students and observers of New Zealand foreign policy. I would like to express my deep gratitude to Ngāi Tahu rangatira Tā Tipene O'Regan who has long been a kaumatua and ally of this project. I would also like to thank Toby Dalley and Emma Drummond for research assistance in the final stages of editing this book. I am grateful to NATO-SPS and the University of Canterbury for the funding which made the 2017 hui and this book project possible.

I dedicate this book with love to my husband Z.J. and our children Francesca, Silas and Matteo.

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Chapter 1

Small Can Be Huge: New Zealand Foreign Policy in an Era of Global Uncertainty



Anne-Marie Brady

New Zealand, like many small states, is at a pivotal moment as it responds to a complex new security environment. A series of events is putting massive pressure on the international order. To name just a few: Russia's aggression in Crimea and new naval doctrine, China's intransigence over South China Sea territorial disputes and emerging maritime strategy, the disruptive effect of President Trump's iconoclastic foreign policy that is alienating allies as well as exacerbating the domestic political divide, the impact of Brexit on the economy and politics of both the UK and the EU, the spread of radical terrorist acts on a global scale, the refugee crisis, and the effects of climate change. Adding to this is the rising isolationist sentiment in many states. Small states are on the front lines of all these events, which are bringing about major shifts in the formerly stable post-WWII international order.

All the more worrying for a small state like New Zealand is that the great powers China, Russia, USA—and some of the medium powers—are increasingly ignoring the international rules-based order. The world is seeing a return of both 'might is right' politics and spheres of influence. Maintaining the integrity of the international rules-based order is essential for the security of the small states like New Zealand, as it grants all states an equal voice and equal rights. The return of great powers attempting to carve out spheres of influence puts pressure on the efforts by New Zealand and other small states to maintain an independent foreign policy.

Small states make up half of the membership of the United Nations. Historically, small states like New Zealand have been unable to protect themselves militarily or economically against larger powers, so they tend to defend themselves by forming an alliance with larger states and joining multilateral organisations. As history has shown, the weakness of small states in a time of rising security threats can undermine the security of larger powers.

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Small states are generally defined as those nations that are small in landmass, population, economy, and military capacity. They are also more affected by global shifts in power. But the old concepts of size of territory as a measure of relative power are no longer as significant as the size of a nation's maritime or space boundaries—or cyber defence capacity. Small states can compensate for their inbuilt vulnerability by adopting strengthening measures to overcome the problem of size. With a population of only 4.8 million, New Zealand has the world's fifth largest territorial sea, a strategic satellite slot with coverage of a third of the globe, abundant supplies of clean water, arable land large enough to feed 90 million people, and the ability to harness cyber defence. New Zealand also has an international reputation as one of the least corrupt nations in the world, a world-class education system, as well as a long-established social welfare system, which ensures a safety net underpinning social stability and cohesion.

A new global order is emerging. Small states like New Zealand must work hard to adjust. New Zealand is a multicultural, democratic, post-colonial state in a remote corner of the world; with a remarkably high level of international participation and interests. New Zealand's colonial history pulled the government into close alliances with the UK, USA, and Australia. Yet New Zealand's economic partnerships, population, and geography have pulled the country in another direction too: the dynamic Asia-Pacific, where nearly two-thirds of New Zealand trade now flows. As a small state that relies on international trade for economic prosperity and the protection of great powers for its security, New Zealand is very vulnerable to shifts in the global balance of economic and political power. New Zealand is the largest and most developed of the small island states of the Southwest Pacific and its geography, history, and cultural associations tie it to the security of the region as a whole.

The nation of New Zealand, founded with the signing of the Treaty of Waitangi between Māori chiefs and the British Crown in 1840, has had an extended transition from being a colony of Great Britain to full independence. Formerly described as Britain's "South Pacific farm", New Zealand's economic prosperity was based on access to the British market. Great Britain was the main market for New Zealand's dairy and meat products in World War Two, and for many years after. Until the fall of Singapore in 1942, New Zealand also relied on the UK for its security. During World War Two, New Zealand partnered with Australia and the United States to defend the Pacific against the Japanese invasion. By the 1950s, New Zealand had become a formal ally of the USA; joined in a security agreement with the USA and Australia in the ANZUS Treaty (1951), and then from 1955, added into the multi-lateral signals intelligence agreement UKUSA (more commonly known as Five Eyes) with the USA, UK, Australia and Canada.

Many New Zealand political leaders expressed ambivalence, both privately and publicly, about those arrangements and the constraints they placed on New Zealand's foreign and economic relations. A series of global events in the late 1960s and into the early 1970s, led to a shift in New Zealand foreign policy and eventually a shift in New Zealand's security arrangements, the effects of which are still being felt today. From the declaration of the 1969 Nixon Doctrine that required

US allies in the Asia-Pacific to take more responsibility for their own defence; to US Secretary of State Henry Kissinger's secret visits to the People's Republic of China in 1969 and 1971 that prepared for the normalization of USA-PRC relations in 1972; the entry of the PRC into the United Nations in 1971 after having been excluded from the UN China seat for twenty-two years; the UK's entry into the European Economic Community in 1973, and the global oil crisis in the same year when global oil prices went from \$3 a barrel to almost \$20 a barrel overnight; all these watershed events forced the New Zealand government to adjust both its public stance and policies. The economic challenges of the changed global environment made a particular impact on New Zealand foreign policy. For a small economy such as New Zealand, economic security and trade access are as important as military security. In 1973, despite diversification efforts, thirty percent of New Zealand exports and forty percent of imports were still with the United Kingdom, while the New Zealand economy was heavily dependent on crude oil.

It was time for a re-think of New Zealand foreign policy. As Prime Minister Norman Kirk (1972–1974) wrote, his government “took a fresh look at the world around us and d[id] that through New Zealand eyes. We were determined to widen our contacts, to make our own assessments, and to act as seemed best from a New Zealand point of view.”¹ Within days of being sworn into power, the Kirk Labour government established diplomatic relations with the People's Republic of China. Kirk soon after ordered all New Zealand troops home from Vietnam, and he sent two New Zealand navy frigates to publicly protest against French nuclear testing in the South Pacific. New Zealand's actions attracted considerable global interest, as well as support from other countries. The Kirk government re-focused New Zealand foreign policy on supporting regionalism and regional groupings such as ASEAN and the Pacific Island Forum. As Prime Minister Kirk said, such groupings are “a way of giving regional countries the means of dealing with their own problems and of handling their relations with the major powers on a less unequal basis.”² It was the beginning of an independent New Zealand foreign policy, one which would, in Kirk's words, “express New Zealand's national ideals as well as reflect New Zealand's national interests.”³ The unspoken lesson of this era was that New Zealand would avoid dependency on any one country and hedge against risks, whether in energy, security, or trade.

Getting the balance right between national interests and national ideals is never easy, all the more so for a small state. In two landmark books in 1980 and 1991, three University of Canterbury political scientists, John Henderson, Keith Jackson, and Richard Kennaway and a team of New Zealand foreign policy scholars assessed the progress made in New Zealand's quest to forge a more independent foreign policy

¹Kirk (1974), p. 92.

²Kirk (1974), p. 95.

³Reported in *The Dominion*, 29 December 1972, cited in Michael Bassett, “Kirk, Norman Eric,” *Te Ara - the Encyclopedia of New Zealand*, accessed 21 February 2019, <https://teara.govt.nz/en/biographies/5k12/kirk-norman-eric>.

path since the Kirk government.⁴ In his chapter on small state theory in *Beyond New Zealand: The Foreign Policy of a Small State* (1991) Henderson defined the characteristics of the small state as follows: 1. low participation in international affairs due to limited resources; 2. narrow scope; 3. economic focus; 4. internationalism; 5. moral emphasis; 6. and risk-avoidant. So how does New Zealand currently measure on those six terms? And what do these characteristics tell us about the foreign policy dilemmas New Zealand currently faces and the approaches successive New Zealand governments have adopted to deal with them?

Low Participation in International Affairs New Zealand has long had a high level of participation in international affairs by joining alongside the nation's great power allies the United Kingdom and the USA in various conflicts and from taking an active role in the United Nations.

Narrow Scope New Zealand has always had a broad focus in its international relations through the activities of its great power allies. New Zealand has been an active participant in international governance activities such as at the UN, international peacekeeping, and the Antarctic Treaty System. Despite a relatively small diplomatic corps, New Zealand manages its foreign policy via a "Team New Zealand" approach, setting a broad strategy on core policy areas such as Antarctic and Pacific affairs, and drawing on a range of government departments across the public sector to implement policy, as well as increasingly, drawing on the assistance of NGOs, academics and business.

Economic Focus The Fourth Labour government (1984–1990) identified trade as the primary focus of New Zealand foreign policy. As a capital-poor nation, New Zealand is also dependent on access to international finance and investment. New Zealand trade negotiators pioneered the latest generation of free trade agreements, both bilateral and plurilateral. New Zealand has been a key player in GATT, the WTO, APEC, the TPPA and then CPTPP, and was an early member of China's Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB).

Internationalism New Zealand is an ardent supporter of international law and resolving any disputes via international arbitration. Like most small states, New Zealand is also reliant on multilateral organisations such as the UN and the Antarctic Treaty System to protect its national interests. But the return in recent years to "might is right" in global politics and new global problems such as resource scarcity and climate change is putting pressure on these international organisations. New Zealand is working hard to expand the range of partners it can work with on specific issues, forming temporary coalitions of the willing. New Zealand can thus hedge against potential problems and risks in dealing with the great powers by developing new relationships and enhancing old ones, creating alliances around specific interests with other small and medium sized states.

⁴Henderson et al. (1980) and Henderson and Kennaway (1991).

Volunteering for leadership positions within international organisations has also proved to be a smart and effective way to increase New Zealand's global influence. New Zealand, in common with some other small states, likes to characterise itself as a broker and facilitator, a neutral intermediary that can help broker conflict between other states. New Zealand has shown a knack for ideas leadership in many aspects of international governance. New Zealand's strengths are Pacific affairs, Antarctica, climate change, environmental policies, disarmament and indigenous rights. New Zealand's internationalism has one overriding goal, which transcends any specific aim: to establish a transparent rules-based regime fair to small players like New Zealand itself.

Moral Emphasis In 1987 the Labour government of New Zealand passed the New Zealand Nuclear Free Zone, Disarmament, and Arms Control Act, which declared New Zealand a nuclear-free zone. The Act, which represented a symbolic gesture of opposition to the nuclear arms race of the great powers, gained New Zealand international kudos and has become a source of great pride in New Zealand. The belief that New Zealand would stand up for what is right and base its foreign policy on its values has become part of the national culture. Yet in the current environment of multiple global challenges and great power conflict, New Zealand is noticeably shying away from “megaphone diplomacy” and prefers to try to work behind the scenes to address concerns. For example in 2018, the New Zealand Coalition government (2017-) refused to join other states in publicly condemning Russia after the Skripal poisonings in the UK, or to join with other states in publicly criticising China after two Canadian citizens were arbitrarily detained by China and accused of being spies.

Risk Avoidant “Loyal opposition” has traditionally characterised New Zealand's foreign policy behaviour. New Zealand has a tradition of raising concerns with allies and strategic partners behind closed doors—avoiding public disagreement. The public confrontation with France over atmospheric testing in 1973 and the bombing of the Greenpeace vessel *Rainbow Warrior* in Auckland harbour in 1985, as well as in 1985 and 1987 with the USA over the nuclear issue, was the exception, rather than the rule. New Zealand's diplomats are proud that they are frequently at the ‘top table’ in many international negotiations. This starts with maintaining positive relations with all the major players and avoiding publicly confronting or embarrassing them.

Henderson, Jackson, and Kennaway's foreign policy analysis texts were written at a time when New Zealand was on the cusp of a new phase in foreign policy. These were the years when decades of public protest against nuclear weapons and New Zealand's military relationship with the USA culminated in the Labour Party government of the day (1984–1990) seeking to balance military-strategic relations with the USA with a new emphasis on economic-strategic relations with China.⁵ Now New Zealand foreign policy is at yet another turning point. New Zealand has

⁵Clark (1987).

begun the process of making an adjustment in its foreign relations with China, and in parallel, with a number of other important bilateral relationships,⁶ in order to reduce security risks such as:

- perceived trade dependency (as of 2018, 24.25% of New Zealand’s exports are with China).
- ongoing cyber attacks by China, described by New Zealand’s minister for cyber defence as a form of “modern warfare”.⁷
- an acknowledgement that the risk involved in allowing Chinese company Huawei to set up New Zealand’s 5G network cannot be balanced by potential cost-savings.⁸
- the Chinese government’s expansion of military activities into the South Pacific and the debt dependency and client-state relationship of many Pacific states with China.
- facing up to the problem of the Chinese government’s extensive political interference activities in New Zealand.⁹

The above are all significant challenges, yet the government is attempting to make this correction without any deterioration in New Zealand’s overall relationship with China. New Zealand’s Coalition government continues to highlight the positive aspects of New Zealand-China relations, at the same time as making significant domestic and foreign policy changes, and delaying completing arrangements to join Xi Jinping’s signature project, the Belt Road Initiative Project. In February 2018, New Zealand Foreign Minister Winston Peters quipped to the New Zealand Parliament that “the art of diplomacy is to jump into troubled waters without making a splash.”¹⁰ The adjustments in the New Zealand-China relationship had already begun in the last two years of the National Party government (2008–2017); which spoke about on China’s aggressive island-building activities in the South China Sea and passed the Outer Space and High Altitudes Activities Bill (2017) banning “further” near space launches “without permission”¹¹—meanwhile signing a

⁶MFAT, “Strategic Intentions, 2018–2022,” <https://www.mfat.govt.nz/assets/MFAT-Corporate-publications/MFAT-Strategic-Intentions-2018-2022.pdf>.

⁷“Chinese Hacking ‘No Surprise’ Andrew Little,” Radio New Zealand, 21 December 2018, <https://www.radionz.co.nz/news/political/378773/chinese-hacking-no-surprise-andrew-little>.

⁸Chris Keall, “GCSB Bans Spark from Using Huawei Gear for its 5G Network,” *NZ Herald*, 28 November 2018, https://www.nzherald.co.nz/business/news/article.cfm?c_id=3&objectid=12167798.

⁹As discussed in publicly released briefings for the incoming Coalition government: Government Communications Security Bureau and the New Zealand Security Intelligence Service, *Briefing to the Incoming Minister* (2017), 10; Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, *Briefing to Incoming Minister for National Security and Intelligence* (October 2017), 7, <https://www.beehive.govt.nz/feature/briefings-incoming-ministers-foreign-affairs-security>.

¹⁰Winston Peters cited in New Zealand Parliamentary Debates, vol. 727, 14 February 2018, https://www.parliament.nz/en/pb/hansard-debates/rhr/combined/HansD_20180214_20180214.

¹¹“New Rules around New Zealand Space Exploration,” New Zealand Parliament, last modified 21 April 2017, <https://www.parliament.nz/en/get-involved/topics/topic-archive/new-rules-around-nz-space-exploration>.

non-binding Memorandum of Agreement (an agreement to discuss) on the Belt Road Initiative. New Zealand's obsessive quest for trade liberalisation should be understood in this context, hedging against over-exposure to the China market, in the same way that New Zealand hedged against over-exposure to the UK market when the UK government began its negotiations to enter the European Economic Community.

In March 2018, New Zealand's Coalition government announced a new significant foreign policy called the "Pacific reset".¹² As was the case in World War II¹³ and has becoming increasingly obvious in the changed global order, the small island states of the South Pacific act as a shield for New Zealand. If a hostile nation controlled one of the island states on New Zealand's maritime periphery, they could cut off New Zealand shipping and communications. Supporting the politics and economy of Pacific island nations is thus a basic means for protecting the security of New Zealand. At the same time, the small island states of the Pacific are facing major issues such as rising sea levels, illegal fishing, people smuggling, drug smuggling and gun-running—problems they cannot solve on their own. Now more than ever, the Pacific states and territories need to pull together to address common concerns.

In May 2018, New Zealand's Minister of Foreign Affairs Winston Peters articulated the reasons for New Zealand's major foreign policy shift, stating:

We are at a turning point, where the importance of protecting our interests in the face of converging geo-political and trade challenges is ever greater, as global rules are under threat, and as geopolitical changes are calling into question the primacy of the system. Some countries are seeking to reshape global rules and institutions in ways that do not always support our interests or reflect our values, hence we must remain vigilant and prepared to assert our interests and values.¹⁴

Getting the China relationship right is going to be one of New Zealand's greatest foreign policy challenges in the next few decades. But it is by no means the only challenge New Zealand must address. The emerging global order requires New Zealand to draw on all its resources to respond proactively to change. More than ever before, the New Zealand government needs access to contestable, deep policy analysis to shape its foreign policy response. In a further landmark speech on New Zealand foreign policy in July 2018, Peters stated, "New Zealand is at an inflection point in its history so we encourage our best and brightest to challenge the orthodoxy of small state foreign policy analysis. It is not a time for intellectual timidity."¹⁵ This book is a response to that call.

¹²Winston Peters, "'Shifting the Dial,' Eyes Wide Open, Pacific Reset," (speech, presented at Lowy Institute, Sydney 1 March 2018), accessed 28 February 2019, <https://www.beehive.govt.nz/speech/shifting-dial>.

¹³Hasluck (1951), p. 311.

¹⁴Winston Peters, "First Steps" (pre-budget speech, 8 May 2018), accessed 28 February 2019, <https://www.beehive.govt.nz/speech/first-steps>.

¹⁵Winston Peters, "Next Steps" (speech, presented to Otago Foreign Policy School, 29 June 2018), accessed 28 February 2019, <https://www.beehive.govt.nz/speech/next-steps>.

Building on, and adding to, the field of New Zealand foreign policy analysis and theory,¹⁶ *Small States and the Changing Global Order: New Zealand Faces the Future* analyses how a representative small state such as New Zealand is adjusting to the changing geopolitical, geo-economic, environment. The various chapters in the book provide a critical examination of New Zealand's foreign policy choices as it faces the new security environment. The book proposes policy-relevant and theoretically-rigorous research that will help students of New Zealand foreign policy better understand New Zealand's foreign policy choices as well as assist New Zealand foreign policymakers in preparing to face the changing global order.

New Zealand's foreign policy dilemmas are typical of many small states in the world today and can help inform theoretical debates on the role of small states in the changing international system. *Small States and the Changing Global Order: New Zealand Faces the Future* examines a series of questions including: How is New Zealand adjusting to the changing geopolitical environment? Will New Zealand be forced to choose between continuing its military-strategic alliance with the USA, or deepening its economic-strategic partnership with China? Should New Zealand work more to partner with other like-minded small and medium power governments and give up the notion that it needs to seek shelter with one or other of the great powers? Is neutrality or pacifism the ultimate goal of New Zealand's independent foreign policy path? What are New Zealand's core strategic interests and how can they be strengthened and maintained in the coming years? The book includes perspectives from some of New Zealand's leading, as well as emerging, commentators on New Zealand foreign policy and is organised into four sections. The first section looks at New Zealand foreign policy and institutions. The second section explores key bilateral relationships and how these are being affected by the changing global order. The third section looks at New Zealand's participation in international governance and multi-lateral organisations, for a small state an important means to defend its national interests. The fourth and final section confronts the status quo and examines the range of options available to New Zealand in facing up to the future.

Over the years since the last major adjustment in New Zealand foreign policy was made in the late 1980s, New Zealand has been engaging in a self-conscious process of imagining and establishing its own international identity, and in that process, learning to embrace its bicultural heritage. As Ngāi Tahu rangatira Tā Tipene O'Regan highlighted in his Waitangi Day speech in 2019, "Our society has managed successfully to digest the re-assertion of Māori cultural singularity and to value the way in which it brings vibrancy to our national identity and enhances it with colour and distinctiveness."¹⁷ More and more, New Zealand foreign policy is seeking to acknowledge New Zealand's place in the world, and the values that come out of our

¹⁶Alley (2007), Brown (1999), Gold (1985), Lynch (2006), McKinnon (1993), Patman et al. (2017); Pettman (2005), Templeton (1993, 1995) and Trotter (1993).

¹⁷Tā Tipene O'Regan, Ngāi Tahu, "Tā Tipene O'Regan's Waitangi address at Ōnuku" (speech, 6 February 2019), accessed 28 February 2019, https://ngaitahu.iwi.nz/our_stories/ta-tipene-oregans-waitangi-address-at-onuku.

bicultural traditions. The New Zealand foreign ministry now promotes a values-based foreign policy such as rule of law, a high level of transparency and government accountability, openness, fairness, integrity, representation of the voice of small countries, accessibility, honesty, and the concepts of *kaitiakitanga* (stewardship or addressing global challenges for present and future generations), *manākitanga* (honour and respect of others), and *kotahitanga* (drawing strength from New Zealand's diversity).¹⁸ Māori cultural protocol is increasingly being incorporated into New Zealand's diplomatic practice.

Reflecting that bicultural heritage and acknowledging the history it builds on, many New Zealanders, including some of the authors in this book, are increasingly referring to their country as "Aotearoa New Zealand". The New Zealand political system and its foreign policy are built on, and respond to, the values and ideas that have come out of our diverse society. In the words of Tā Tipene, "Our geographical loneliness gifts us the possibility of shaping our world around our own central values. . . those values. . . must be claimed and reclaimed and not permitted to wither through neglect."¹⁹

The changing global order offers both great opportunity and risk for New Zealand and many other small states. New Zealand has a mature set of traditions, values and experiences to draw on when facing the future. New Zealand, like many small states is responding to the challenges of the changing global order with great thought and careful actions. Inaction is not an option.

"Ki te kotahi te kākaho ka whati, ki te kāpuia e kore e whati." Alone we can be broken. Standing together, we are invincible.²⁰ With careful actions and proactive thinking, small states like Aotearoa New Zealand can secure their future. Small can be huge.

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¹⁸MFAT, *Annual Report 2015–2016* (2016), 34, <https://www.mfat.govt.nz/assets/MFAT-Corporate-publications/MFAT-Annual-Report-2015-2016.pdf>; MFAT, "Strategic Intentions, 2018–2022," <https://www.mfat.govt.nz/assets/MFAT-Corporate-publications/MFAT-Strategic-Intentions-2018-2022.pdf>.

¹⁹O'Regan, "Waitangi address."

²⁰A proverb by Tūkāroto Matutaera Pōtatau Te Wherowhero Tāwhiao (1822–1894), Ngāti Mahuta, a leader of the Waikato tribes and the second Māori king.

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Part I
New Zealand Foreign Policy Institutions
and Process

Chapter 2

The Urgent Versus the Important: How Foreign and Security Policy Is Negotiated in New Zealand



Anthony L. Smith

It may surprise students of New Zealand foreign policy to know that at times in the course of New Zealand's foreign policy history, the decision making process may have been more a spontaneous and *ad hoc* one than a carefully considered game-plan. In a candid account of his time as Head of the Prime Minister's Office (1985–1990), John Henderson observed that the reality of foreign policy formation differed somewhat from the “orderly, rational decision making process which is sometimes portrayed in political science textbooks”. He cited the Prime Minister he served, David Lange, as remarking that foreign policy events could be given a coherence afterwards, when in reality any single episode “seemed like a shambles when it happened”.¹

Some leading examples from the past seem to confirm that sobering assessment.

This would include the Lange Administration's refusing the visit of the *USS Buchanan* in 1985, when the Prime Minister left the country (for the then out of telephone reach Tokelau) without informing any cabinet colleagues of New Zealand's background negotiations with Washington; shortly after this incident the US downgraded the relationship.² And the public responses to the Fiji coup of 1987 and attempted coup of 2000, which saw statements directed at particular individuals from leading New Zealand political figures without due regard to Fijian perceptions or a strategic end goal; although a more considered strategic approach

¹Henderson (1991a), p. 211.

²Geoffrey Palmer, then deputy prime minister, confirms no foreknowledge of the *USS Buchanan* arrangements at the time that cabinet had to consider the issue. Palmer, however, did not, at least in his interview for *Radio New Zealand*, admit that this troubled him. Geoffrey Palmer cited in Espiner and Watkin (2017).

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appears to have been achieved in response to the 2006 Fiji coup.³ Even earlier, Robert Muldoon is remembered by officials who worked with him as using foreign policy as a means to shore up domestic support (notably sporting contacts with apartheid South Africa). He also frequently announced new foreign policy during interviews and then expecting the rest of the system to play catch-up.⁴

During New Zealand's post-WWII history as an independent foreign policy actor, New Zealand has faced both evolutionary and sudden shifts to its strategic environment. And, as a small state, it often faces asymmetries of power that has pushed diplomacy to the fore as the main tool New Zealand can use in bilateral and plurilateral engagements. Yet to what extent has New Zealand been able to prepare for, and respond to, changes in the global environment through a carefully constructed whole-of-government (often known as "NZ Inc") strategy? Longer term thinking and planning, while being nimble enough to account for 'out of the blue' international events, has generally challenged the New Zealand decision-making machinery. Yet the institutions charged with thinking about New Zealand and its external environment, while still subject to the usual reactive pressures, have made serious attempts to rethink their structures in order to underwrite longer term decision-making.

Just as the Sun would have appeared to pre-modern people (and to the naked eye) as a solid object in the sky, states (and their supporting institutions) appear as a single solid object to the outsider. They are not. On every major foreign policy question, a negotiation occurs within government that can at times be more intense than negotiations with external parties. Domestic public pressures may push in contradictory directions for political leaders, government departments will often champion markedly different interests, individual departments will often be subject to fierce internal debates, the political executive can often be divided or have one or two outlier views, all the way through to the Prime Minister who might have strong feelings of ambivalence. Robert Putnam's work on Two Level Game Theory notes the strong tendency for internal divisions on foreign policy decisions, and in addition how they can coalesce with (or collide with) external influences.⁵ The important concept to carry forward is that on any given national interest question there are two negotiations being carried out at any one time: the discussion within the New Zealand government system on one hand; and the international exchange or foreign policy outcome on the other.

³Green (2013). In contrast to some of the ad hoc approaches taken to Fiji's troubles in earlier decades, Michael Green judged that New Zealand's response to the 2006 Bainimarama coup was quite carefully calibrated (contrary to the claims of a number of critics, who in some cases sympathized with the stated 'post-racial' coup aims). The decision to place sanctions on members of the Bainimarama regime were designed not to impact on ordinary Fijians, while trade and aid links remained intact. These approaches were also coordinated carefully with a number of external partners.

⁴An inside view of Muldoon's Administration is found in Hensley (2006).

⁵Putnam (1988).

The national interest is actually an extremely vague concept.⁶ There is no single meaning of this term waiting to be revealed. Contrary to the assumptions of some older readings of international relations theory; it is state institutions and their societies that determine national interest.⁷ There are some objective facts that influence New Zealand foreign policy (such as geographic isolation as well as small population and market size), but it is important not to lose sight of the highly subjective elements of determining foreign policy. Even a cursory examination of New Zealand's situation immediately reveals that Wellington has many choices to make when it formulates foreign policy. Lord Palmerston once famously said "there are no permanent friends, only permanent interests", whereas how national interest is pursued (even when constant) is subject to constant change, either because of altered international circumstances or because of shifts in New Zealand's perception. How, then, is this resolved in New Zealand?

There are not large amounts written about the internal institutional foreign policy dialogue (or in the terminology of the New Zealand public service, "the inter-agency process"). An exception to this is a chapter by former Foreign Affairs Secretary (1967–1971), George Laking, who gave a short but illuminating institutional history of his Ministry as part of a contribution to a book to commemorate the 50th anniversary of Foreign Affairs in 1993.⁸ Other notable commentary would include Malcolm MacKinnon's 1993 diplomatic history (*Independence and Foreign Policy: New Zealand in the World*, Auckland University Press) and the collected works of Auckland University's Steve Hoadley (notably *The New Zealand Foreign Affairs Handbook*, Oxford University Press, editions in 1989 and 1992). Some particular episodes have been written about by participants that give occasional glimpses into the decision-making machinery—and examples from what sits in the public domain from past episodes, largely from previous governments, will form the sole basis of this chapter. We should probably abandon any notion that there is a singular foreign policy process. "Foreign policy" is the convergence of multiple different lines of effort and grey areas, with frequent and ongoing decisions about what is business-as-usual (for, say, embassies), what requires Wellington's attention, and what needs to be decided at the level of Foreign Minister and/or wider cabinet.

There is scope for a lot more research to be done into the question of how New Zealand foreign policy is actually made than could be covered here. This chapter will consider: how the challenges of this country's small state status saw the Ministry of Foreign Affairs acquire primacy over external decisions, or became something like 'first amongst equals' (or officially, "principal agent"); how the relationship between the Minister of Foreign Affairs and the Prime Minister, together with Defence, has been accompanied by institutional developments to underpin attempts for a more joined up and farsighted policy process (including all-of-government conceptions of national security and risk); how the decision

⁶Frankel (1970).

⁷Burchill (2005), p. 4.

⁸Laking (1993).

makers acquire knowledge about the world, with particular emphasis on how assessed intelligence product is used; and how wider society has interacted with the process, including consideration of Treaty of Waitangi principles.

2.1 Who Runs New Zealand Foreign Policy?

“The Ministry [of Foreign Affairs and Trade] remains the only government department in a position to see, and to be charged with seeing, the totality of New Zealand’s relations with other countries and to advise on where the national interest lies”—so claimed a former Secretary of Foreign Affairs, Richard Nottage in 1993.⁹ While Nottage was concerned at the time that not all in the New Zealand government system would accept this proposition, he was (and is) essentially correct. At least Nottage could lay greater claim to this after the 1988 merger of foreign affairs and trade negotiations into a single ministry. The New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade is effectively the chief organising agency for New Zealand’s offshore effort. MFAT could be considered ‘first amongst equals’ in this regard; in other words, the leader of a wider government effort that still requires brokering, give-and-take, and, ultimately, some form of consensus.

Most New Zealand government entities will have some form of off-shore role, but a list of those with formal overseas representation at diplomatic posts give some idea of the contemporary picture that it is not just the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade that is involved in international relations. In addition to MFAT itself, the following agencies have accredited representation: Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment (both immigration and science); New Zealand Trade and Enterprise; Tourism New Zealand; New Zealand Defence Force; Department of Internal Affairs; Education New Zealand; New Zealand Police; New Zealand Customs Service; Ministry of Primary Industries; and the Treasury.

While the centrality of MFAT may seem a statement of the obvious to some readers, it is worth remembering that a country’s foreign ministry is not necessarily the “principal agent” of foreign policy outcomes in many other jurisdictions, or at least not as prominent as it has been in New Zealand. Allan Gyngell and Michael Wesley note that foreign policy making is actually a diverse set of actions. They break it into four levels: strategic (defining the national interest and values, including through public statements and White Papers); contextual (the domestic and international environments in which the decision occurs); organisational (prioritisation of externally focused agencies); and operational (the carrying out of foreign policy representation and implementation).¹⁰ It is at the strategic level of foreign policy making and national security consideration in particular, where we can see some variation of practice internationally.

⁹Nottage (1993), pp. 205–206.

¹⁰Gyngell and Wesley (2007).

In the United States it could not be said that the State Department is always the organising agent of US foreign policy making around general strategic direction and major international episodes. In a highly contested environment like Washington, foreign policy is often an iterative dialogue between State and Defense (and, at times, other departments such as Treasury and the Office of the US Trade Representative), which is then brokered by the relatively small staff of the National Security Council in their buildings attached to the White House.

In Commonwealth countries, the role of the office and person of the prime minister as a foreign policy actor often emerges. New Zealand prime ministers have played prominent roles in high-level decision making, in the way that Helen Clark centralised decisions on defence deployments after 9/11, or that John Key took the cabinet role of tourism promotion to reflect his personal interest in trade and foreign exchange earnings. New Zealand prime ministers have also been central to Trans-Tasman relations, particularly though the annual leaders' bilateral meeting, but also through head of government representation at the annual Pacific Islands Forum.

The pattern of engagement with foreign policy by the head of government can, however, take more sustained and direct forms in other systems relative to the diplomatic corps. British prime ministers, who have always played a role in central foreign policy actions, are said to have increasingly asserted control over the Foreign Office through political advisors in Number 10 Downing Street and the circulation of prime ministerial favourites into key roles in the diplomatic corps.¹¹ Tony Blair's insertion into the bureaucratic decision making over the Iraq War is a well-documented example. In a case that has some parallels with the British system, India's foreign policy brokerage probably largely occurs in close proximity to the Prime Minister, usually through the PM's national security staff, and less so within India's quite small foreign ministry.¹² Even though Australia's Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) has largely remained "dominant" in the foreign policy process,¹³ prime ministers and their immediate staff have at times played an outsized role. DFAT is usually represented by a senior minister, the same is also true of one of Australia's largest budget spends, the Defence establishment, and its accompanying front bench minister.

All the above go to show that it should not be an assumption that a foreign ministry will occupy central position on the full range of a country's external relationships—or as central as MFAT has been in the New Zealand case.

¹¹Roberts (2009), p. 32; Sampson (2004), p. 137.

¹²Menon (2016), pp. 191–192. Menon, a career diplomat who also served as India's National Security Adviser (2010–2014) notes that foreign policy is centralised in the prime minister and that the "Ministry of External Affairs lacks capacity", leading to problems of lack of institutional hierarchy and weak policy implementation.

¹³Gyngell and Wesley (2007), p. 58. See also Gyngell (2017).

How do we know that MFAT has the position in the system that Nottage claimed it has? MFAT's central position can be seen in, or inferred from, the following bureaucratic arrangements:

- The names and configurations of the relevant cabinet committee has altered over time, but the Minister of Foreign Affairs has always been central to this structure. The main Cabinet committee under the Coalition government (2017-) for foreign policy and national security is External Relations and Security (ERS) and is chaired by the Minister of Foreign Affairs (MFA). ERS includes the Prime Minister and Deputy Prime Minister, and also has ministerial representation to cover, *inter alia*, biosecurity, civil defence, customs, defence, immigration, police and intelligence collection agencies (GCSB and SIS). This merges two committees that existed in the previous government, External Relations and Defence Committee (chaired by MFA) and the National Security Committee (chaired by the PM). Security matters that might come before Cabinet's External Relations and Security committee can be divided into two areas—those considered to be in the “governance” category (preparation for hazards, risks and threats through institutional, statutory provisions and resource allocations) and those in the “crisis response” to potential or imminent disruption. Sitting below ministers are the Chief Executives of relevant ministries and agencies that form the Officials' Committee for Domestic and External Security Coordination (ODESC) system, further divided into two alternative manifestations of the Security and Intelligence Board (external) and Hazard Risk Board (natural disasters). This system of coordination is not a hierarchical one, and depends to some considerable degree on soft power persuasion. It does not supplant the individual statutory powers and responsibilities of any of the ODESC member agencies. In a crisis situation a lead agency is established (such as police in a terrorism contingency). In 2016–2017 watch groups met 51 times and ODESC meetings occurred roughly once a month—in addition to natural disasters, this included cyber threats, counter-terrorism, aviation security, and the security of major events.¹⁴ The 2016 National Security Handbook, in addition to those aforementioned issues, makes reference to national security consideration of state and armed conflict and transnational organised crime.¹⁵
- The Foreign Affairs portfolio was generally held by the prime minister until 1975; and David Lange reverted to this system in his first term (1984–1987). Outside of this, the portfolio has been held by a senior minister in the New Zealand system, and the growing demands of the role have now crowded out the ability to include it alongside another substantive portfolio (whereas in New Zealand most other ministers would have multiple portfolios). On two separate occasions the portfolio has been offered up in coalition negotiations, in both cases being given to

¹⁴Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet (2017), p. 2, <https://www.dPMC.govt.nz/sites/default/files/2017-12/bim-national-security-and-intelligence-oct-2017.pdf>.

¹⁵Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet (2016), <https://www.dPMC.govt.nz/sites/default/files/2017-03/dPMC-nss-handbook-aug-2016.pdf>.

New Zealand First Leader and Deputy Prime Minister, Winston Peters; these appointments, however, have remained in keeping with the seniority of the role. The Minister of Foreign Affairs often (but not always) outranks the Minister of Defence. One recent exception occurred during the Fifth National Government when Gerry Brownlee, as the third ranked member of the National Caucus, served as Defence Minister from 2014 to mid 2017. Gerry Brownlee then succeeded Murray McCully as Foreign Minister in May 2017, at which point Mark Mitchell, a brand new entrant to cabinet, took over as Defence Minister.

- MFAT career diplomats have frequently been seconded or otherwise relocated into senior leadership positions within the Ministry of Defence and the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet, and occasionally other areas of government. (This has occurred at mid-levels too.) In addition, MFAT had, until relatively recently, one of the lowest turnovers in the New Zealand public sector. As the 2017 Performance Improvement Framework noted, while MFAT “prides itself on hiring and retaining the best and the brightest”, it issued a caution around “the unintended belief that the Ministry can be self-sufficient in its capability needs”.¹⁶ The Fifth National Government broke new ground here. Some senior roles in Defence, DPMC and the intelligence sector went to individuals with a wider background in public service professionalism—including from the State Services Commission. Furthermore, MFAT acquired its first non-career diplomat as Secretary when the government appointed former commercial lawyer and NZ Post head, John Allen, to the CEO’s role (2009–2015). Under Minister McCully, and with John Allen at the helm, MFAT went through a sizeable restructure in 2011 that saw a number of staff depart.
- Over time the number of New Zealand agencies represented offshore have grown markedly, and the Ambassador/High Commissioner is recognised as the peak representative and coordinator of the New Zealand effort within host countries and organisations. MFAT’s *Statement of Intent 2008–2011* notes that: “The Government has authorised the Heads of New Zealand’s diplomatic posts around the world to ensure that all government agencies in a country operate in a coherent and aligned way in pursuit of the Government’s goals.”¹⁷ The document notes these guidelines were approved in 2007, which is when a Cabinet Minute to this effect was issued. This does build on an earlier model. In 1978, a committee headed by Sir Clifford Plimmer recommended the need for far greater integration at overseas missions, noting the authority of heads of mission with respect to all staff, and all agencies, present at any given post—known at the time as “the Plimmer System”.¹⁸

¹⁶State Services Commission (2017), <http://www.mfat.govt.nz/assets/Corporate/ministry-foreign-affairs-trade-pif-2017.pdf>.

¹⁷Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade (2008), p. 7, https://www.parliament.nz/resource/en-NZ/48DBHOH_PAP16588_1/aebe09f3a3abf1a3f72cec2d89ca69aafe8aa0eb.

¹⁸Norrish (1993), p. 134.