

Australia's Foreign Minister Hayden queries alliance with United States

by Allen Douglas

Ever since the late-July decision by the U.S. Senate to subsidize wheat sales to the Soviet Union and the People's Republic of China, Australian Prime Minister Robert Hawke and Foreign Minister Bill Hayden have been howling outrage at the damage such subsidized sales will do to Australia's farmers, for whom the Soviets are a major market. They have gone so far, as Hayden did in his Aug. 12 speech at the San Francisco World Affairs Council, and as Hawke did in a mid-September speech, to question whether the Australian-U.S. alliance, established as U.S., Australian, and New Zealand troops fought side by side in World War II, should continue.

While the financial damage to Australian farmers and the Australian economy is unquestionably real, and constitutes economic warfare against Australia's heavily agricultural export-oriented economy, Hawke and Hayden are using the excuse of the subsidies to do what they have wanted to do anyway: finish wrecking the ANZUS defense pact among Australia, New Zealand, and the United States. Their activities jeopardize the three crucial U.S.-Australian base facilities in Australia, the most important ICBM-SDI testing facility the United States has (at Kwajalein Atoll in the Marshall Islands), the command over the Straits of Malacca passageway from the Indian Ocean/Persian Gulf to the Pacific Ocean, and general intelligence capabilities over tens of thousands of square miles of the South and Central Pacific, an area into which the Soviets are rapidly advancing.

Hawke and Hayden, however, are not acting alone. They are aided and abetted by a fifth column in the United States, centered around Secretary of State George Shultz and Senate Foreign Relations Committee chairman Richard Lugar (R-Ind.), two of the chief figures in the overthrow of Philippine President Ferdinand Marcos. Shultz's State Department has let it be known that it is considering signing the protocols of the Soviet-designed nuclear-free zone of the South Pacific, the same operation, which, as applied by New Zealand Prime Minister, David Lange resulted in the break-up of ANZUS. At the same time, Senator Lugar toured Australia and New Zealand in late August announcing, "These are protocols that we will find acceptable in due course." And while Shultz is shedding crocodile tears for Australian farmers, it was Shultz's personal associate, Henry Kissinger, who first set up the

Soviet-U.S. wheat deals in 1972 as part of the Strategic Arms Limitation Talks (SALT) appeasement process, wheat deals which have remained under State Department (*not* Agriculture Department) coordination ever since!

Soviet moves in the South Pacific

In his Aug. 12 San Francisco speech, Hayden raised an astonishing series of questions, which have been censored from the Australian and U.S. press. He asked: "What exactly is the value of the alliance to both of its partners?" "How firm is the friendship which underpins the alliance and gives it its strength?" "How consistent is the community of interest which gives the alliance its staying power?"

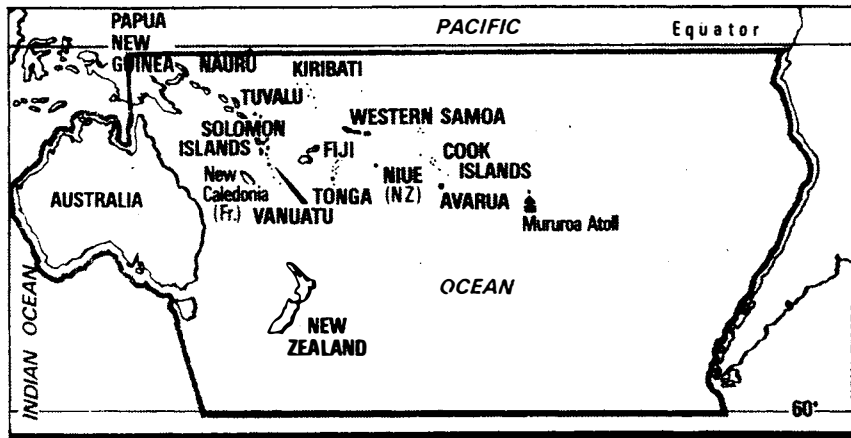
Hayden's questions must be seen against the tempo of Soviet military and diplomatic initiatives in the region. The Soviet Union is a major Asian and Pacific power, stressed Soviet party chief Mikhail Gorbachov in his Vladivostok speech July 28. Gorbachov outlined a series of initiatives aimed at weakening the military capabilities, as well as political will, of the West. These included an arms control/disarmament Helsinki-style process, turning the Philippines, Japan, Australia, and New Zealand into "neutral" or "non-aligned" areas. Gorbachov specified: "The U.S.S.R. supports the idea of making the South Pacific a nuclear-free zone and calls on all nuclear powers, unilaterally or multilaterally, to guarantee its status."

To carry out this Pacific plan, the Soviets have extensively reorganized and upgraded those sections of the Foreign Ministry responsible for Asia and the Pacific. New high-level personnel have been added, and a new Pacific Department has been set up to focus on Japan, Australia, New Zealand, and the Pacific island countries. In addition to top Soviet "Asia hand," Deputy Foreign Minister Mikhail Kapitsa, who visited New Zealand the last week in August to put the seal on the nuclear-free zone treaty, another deputy foreign minister, Ivan Rogachev, has been moved in to enhance Soviet Asian operations.

This reorganization and upgrading is reflected in:

1) Intense deployments for a South Pacific nuclear free zone, capped by Kapitsa's late-August New Zealand visit and announcement that the Soviets would sign the protocols

South Pacific nuclear-free zone



This map is taken from the Soviet English-language magazine New Times, dated Sept. 1, 1986. The accompanying article lauds the 14-member South Pacific Forum's early August endorsement of the Soviet-designed nuclear-free zone concept, for which Australian Prime Minister Hawke and New Zealand Prime Minister Lange, once the lawyer for the Moscow-funded Socialist Unity Party, are chief organizers. The article neglects to note the dramatic expansion of Soviet activities in the area, including the near-term establishment of Soviet port facilities in Papua New Guinea and Vanuatu, along with increasingly pointed "requests" to New Zealand for the same.

for the nuclear-free zone, and Soviet demands, through Papua New Guinea and Vanuatu, for a further tightening of the nuclear-free zone to stop any sort of transport, by air or sea, of any kind of nuclear material whatsoever;

2) The Aug. 28 announcement by Papua New Guinea's Foreign Minister Legu Vagi that his country would open negotiations with the Soviets for "fishing rights," including the now-standard Soviet demand for "shore facilities." Papua New Guinea is just north of Australia, and sits at the eastern edge of the naval choke points between the Indian Ocean/Persian Gulf and the Pacific. A Soviet presence there is not only a danger to Australia, but to world shipping, including Japanese and South Korean oil supplies which must come through these straits;

3) The expectation that Vanuatu, the island nation northeast of Australia, which opened formal diplomatic ties with the Soviets in late May, will grant the U.S.S.R. the right to build a port, ostensibly to service the "tuna fleet" which is sailing around in Vanuatu's notoriously unprofitable fishing waters. Vanuatu's prime minister, Anglican clergyman Walter Lini, stated recently that he "could see no security risk" in granting the Soviets a port in his country. Lini has been instrumental in the creation of a new "Melanesian bloc" of Vanuatu, Papua New Guinea, and the Solomon Islands, all of whom are pushing for a nuclear-free zone, and are on a major agitational push for the "independence" of the Libyan-funded "Melanesian" independence movement, the FLNK in New Caledonia, directly east of Australia.

4) The Sept. 16 visit of two Soviet officials to the island of Fiji to open negotiations for first-ever "trade ties," and to request "fishing rights." Fiji was the site of the early August signing of the nuclear-free zone pact.

5) The meeting Sept. 7 of the Soviets' new Pacific Department head, L. Chizhov, in Canberra with Australia's Bill Hayden to secure Australia's agreement to the perspectives outlined in Gorbachov's July 28 speech.

Contributions of Hawke, Beazley, and Hayden

Against this backdrop of Soviet deployments, consider these actions by Australia's Labor government, actions which in most cases were implemented before the late July "anger" over wheat subsidies:

1) Hawke et al. have begun implementation of the "Dibb Plan" pushed by Defense Minister and former Rhodes Scholar Kim Beazley. The plan downgrades Australia's defense capabilities and moves away from the United States toward "self-reliance," on the bizarre premise that "Australia faces no threat," and even if it did, there would be at least a "ten-year warning time" to deal with it.

2) Beazley announced in June, one month before the furor over the wheat deals, that the United States would not be invited to take part in Australia's major military exercise, Kangaroo '86, in October and November of this year, because of "difficulties with the ANZUS treaty," difficulties caused by Soviet agent-of-influence, New Zealand Prime Minister David Lange.

3) Australia announced that it would pull out of the September "Cope Thunder" joint military exercises with the United States, staged from Clark Air Force Base in the Philippines, because of "resource constraints." Curiously, this comes in the middle of a major Soviet drive to "neutralize" the Philippines, resulting in Philippine Prime Minister Salvador Laurel's August announcement that he would be in favor of granting repair facilities in the Philippines to Soviet "merchant ships."

The Australian Labor government has rejected participation in the U.S. Strategic Defense Initiative. Hawke and Hayden's record on strategic issues parallels Soviet positions. They are not without support from Washington itself. Senate Foreign Relations head Richard Lugar, announced on New Zealand television in late August that the patriotic circles in New Zealand and Australia are "too concerned about the Soviet presence in the South Pacific."