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**The ANZUS Alliance-as-Disastrous Diffusion:
The Political Virology of a Wartime Liaison**

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ABSTRACT

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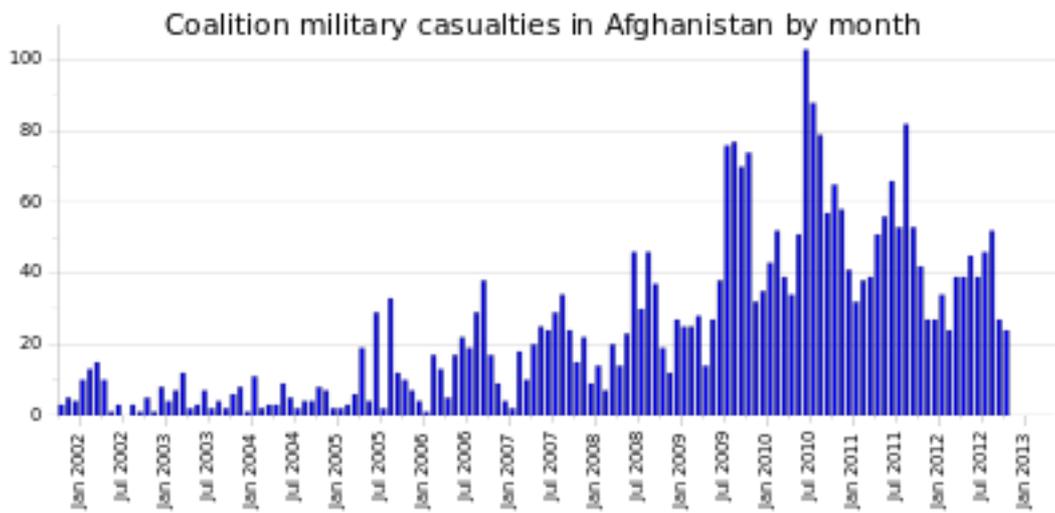
This paper argues that, in the first instance, World War II provided the efficient cause for the security treaty between Australia, New Zealand, and the United States (ANZUS), but that the Cold War provided its final cause for the two subordinate powers: they so abandoned any search for sovereignty within the developing alliance relationship that they became dependent in ways that were escapable, and ultimately, pathological. In the process, evidence - drawn from empirical, comparative-theoretical, and philosophical sources - that their respective trajectories were counter-productive to themselves, and to the alliance, was either not acknowledged or met with serial evasions. This paper then argues that any understanding of these processes must acknowledge, the roles played by the felt isolation, fear, and uncertainty of these countries and the ways in which they have transformed a once pragmatic and essential relationship into system of civil-religious belief. Indeed, across the spectrum of obligations and rituals now entailed in the alliance relationship, any deep criticism of it, particularly in Australia, is accorded the status of heresy, no matter the tragic costs it now exacts in national self-knowledge, self-exploration, and ultimately, lives.

PORTRAITS OF THE PRESENT AS PAST AND FUTURE











The ANZUS Alliance-as-Disastrous Diffusion: The Political Virology of a Wartime Liaison

Introduction

On 10 March 2011, the Prime Minister of Australia, Julia Gillard, in an historic address to the US Congress on the occasion of the 60th anniversary of the security treaty between Australia, New Zealand and the United States (ANZUS), conveyed to that joint sitting the bipartisan view that the United States must be at the centre of the new, emerging world order, that the US remained, as it had been during the Cold War, the “indispensable” superpower, and that Australia was sympathetic to whatever expanded presence in Asia-Pacific in general, and Australia in particular that might be recommended by the impending “force structure review.”¹ Mainstream media reports in Australia were unanimous that the Prime Minister’s speech was extraordinarily effective: she received six standing ovations and ten rounds of seated applause in the course of thirty minutes. Moreover, not only did she deliver parts of it on the verge of tears, she also moved some of her American audience, not least the Speaker of the House, John Boehner, to tears as well.² Even after listening to, and reading the full text, the description some sober observers bestowed upon it - “obsequious” - is inadequate. In truth it is, but much else in it demands a mention because, *in toto*, it is couched in the language of an attendant: thus, the tribute a fawning flatterer pays to a superior - submissively deferential, sycophantic, and full of that disposition which Shakespeare saw as the willingness “to dance attendance on our lordship’s pleasure.”³

¹ Phillip Coorey, “US must be at centre of new world order: PM,” smh.com.au, <http://www.smh.com.au/world/us-must-be-at-centre-of-new-world-order-pm-20110310-1bo6h.html>, accessed 14 January 2013.

² Ibid. The full speech can be found at, “Julia Gillard’s speech to Congress,” smh.com.au, <http://www.smh.com.au/world/julia-gillards-speech-to-congress-20110310-1boee.html>, accessed 14 February 2013.

³ *Henry VIII*, Act V.

Such characteristics in Australian Prime Ministers honoured to speak before the US Congress were not without precedent. Progressively, Julia Gillard's three predecessors – Robert Menzies, Bob Hawke, and John Howard – established a tone in which unconditional fealty to the alliance relationship which the ANZUS engendered, and expressed as military and other contributions to US global strategy, was wrapped in a boisterous, back-slapping *bonhomie* (Hawke and Howard), or, as now, such a close affinity that it is sometimes indistinguishable from intimacy. The inference was, and remains, that the bonds between Australian and the United States are “ties that bind,” indissoluble regardless of whatever vicissitudes international politics might create. Countervailing notions such as Lord Palmerston's – that nations have no such thing as permanent friends or allies, only permanent interests – are not entertained, either because those who most need to know are unaware of Palmerston, or they simply hold the view that whatever insights he might have had are irrelevant and inapplicable to this alliance relationship (and are as well, hazards to a successful career).

Explaining such a dispensation by those policy-makers, decision-makers, scholars, academics, and commentators who, in Australia, define themselves as international relations realists (regardless of whether they actually understand the realism they have expropriated) is a task ill-suited to the discipline of International Relations, both in general, and in terms of that proclaimed by its adherents in Australia. While it can accommodate notions of diffusion, its modernist mind-set turns nauseous when forced to confront modes of thinking, understanding and acting in the world it deems to be irrational. Among these are attributions of pathological personality disorders located in psychology to the nation state – the investment of essentially political arrangements with transcending religious significance, and the willful rejection of evidence that the world is radically different to, and more dangerous, than the image officially promulgated by a nation state, or a group of nation states as regards their dominant alliance partner – in a word, stupidity.

Conceded is the charge that the language already used to this point is inflammatory, or even external to the language of the disciplines of Political Science and International Relations. But the guilty plea is accompanied by the justification that the languages just mentioned are both inadequate to the task of explaining what is at hand, and worse: in an Orwellian sense, they obfuscate by shielding reality, and in so doing “have lighted fools the way to dusty death.” This is not seek mitigation of the charge, only to provide the grounds for a reverse action.

The traverse to this state is, thus, to be seen within two stages, the first of which is the realist neurosis of omnipresent and universal threat and its presentation in the neurotic as the search for a protector - commonly referred to in Australia as a “great and powerful friend” - is legitimately within the processes of diffusion. The argument, however, is that, as a consequence of the respective mind-sets in the United States and Australia, the ensuing alliance relationship attracted a belief system that is essentially religious. It promises temporal salvation - peace of type - to Australia (and previously, New Zealand) for the price of adherence to a life of strategic dogma and practice that, historically and overwhelmingly, has been, deadly, tragic, intellectually and legally insupportable, and a reproach to the prudent requirements of national sovereignty.

The second stage, and one that is the prime concern of this paper, relates to the development of the alliance from common membership in the victorious anti-fascist coalition in World War II, to the establishment of ANZUS in 1951, to the now broader alliance “relationship” that has built on this for decades. In 1966, the Prime Minister of Australia, Harold Holt, felt no embarrassment in indicating his country’s support for the Vietnam War by proclaiming that Australia would be “All the way with LBJ.” Even more than 20 years later, the far more sober and thoughtful Foreign Minister, Gareth Evans, succumbed to the same temptation to overblow:

Our alliance is as relevant as it ever was, as the world changes around us. It is ever more multi-dimensional in character; it is frank and robust when it needs to be; and it totally mutually supportive when it needs to be. In this sense, ours is not only an alliance of democracies, but also a thoroughly democratic alliance.

In the final analysis the strength of the Australia-United States relationship, its durability and its capacity to adapt to changing circumstances, relies on shared interests. But it is also true that a nation's interests, and the direction of its foreign and defence policies in pursuit of those interests, depend significantly on the instincts, outlook and values of its people - what they believe in.

Ultimately, it is because Australians and Americans believe in the same things - democracy, freedom and human rights - that our alliance relationship will endure, will adapt and will go on contributing to the building of a safer and fairer world.⁴

For Evans (and co-author Bruce Grant), then, the passing of the Cold War in no way required a reconsideration of the alliance, or even the glimmerings of a recognition that the historic rationale for the hegemonic role of the United States might just have passed as well. Indeed, the contrary is asserted - the United States and a certain modernist concept of progress to which Australia contributes are indissolubly linked. The US, moreover, is further heralded as "*the exemplar of the Western model.*"⁵ Thus, what Prime Minister Harold Holt had embarrassingly and gratuitously volunteered in 1966, and Gillard's address in 2011 had underlined, had merely been given a lengthier rationale by Evans; but it was all within an ongoing, unchanging history punctuated by such developments as Prime Minister John Howard's embrace of the US post-9/11 to the point where he was described by

⁴ Gareth Evans and Bruce Grant, *Australia's Foreign Relations In the World of the 1990s* (Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 1991), p. 308 (hereafter cited as Evans and Grant, *Australia's Foreign Relations*).

⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 6 and 7 resp.

President Bush as the US “deputy sheriff” in Asia-Pacific,⁶ and Prime Minister Kevin Rudd’s forlorn saluting of Bush (above) at a NATO summit in 2008.⁷

In accounting for this in terms of diffusion the argument is made that what was diffused – the unqualified need for alliance – came about by a particular mode of that process which was an appropriate response to threat, but that, over time, the nature of the alliance’s predominant partner was such that it created a politico-psychological disorder. On closer examination, this was the almost inevitable result of both a disorder in the predominant partner and a corresponding lack of critical understanding of that partner in the subordinates. For the latter, the promise of salvation in the form of security (never rigorously defined, let alone tested for its existence), in conjunction with the imposition of required thought and practice by the US, and further assertions of indispensability and divine mission by the US created a political theology which obviates – indeed anathematizes – the need for critical engagement. Ultimately, it has created in Australia a missionary outpost in which dissent is indistinguishable from apostasy or heresy, and the “elected texts” and “preferred meanings” are writs which authorise blood sacrifice from generation to generation – in Burke’s phrase, “an unpitied sacrifice in a contemptible struggle.” [Because what follows relies on accounts and analyses which probably are not known to the general reader, the pages beyond this paper are supplemented by a series of “fragments” – papers in their own right – which focus in greater detail on the main areas of this one. Even then, these “fragments,” by definition, are far from complete and do not

⁶ Alex Spillius, “Bush entrusts ‘deputy sheriff’ Howard with Pacific policing role,” *The Telegraph*, <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/australiaandthepacific/australia/1438992/Bush-entrusts-deputy-sheriff-Howard-with-Pacific-policing-role.html>, accessed 01 March 2013

⁷ *MailOnline*, “Row as Australian prime minister salutes George Bush at Nato summit, 5 April, 2008,” accessed 1 March 2013. Read more: <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-557168/Row-Australian-prime-minister-salutes-George-Bush-Nato-summit.html#ixzz2MG4Oefjm>

pretend to any status other than as prior reflections, or bases, for the analysis in the immediately following pages].

Processes and Pathologies

In its early stages the diffusion was spontaneous but only to the extent that Australia and New Zealand had been primed, or programmed, to respond in a certain way with alacrity to certain stimuli of a forceful and threatening character. That is was desirable, at that time, is undoubtedly the case; equally, it is also the case that the resultant intermingling became less appropriately defined as diffusion and more accurately understood as infusion - a therapeutic introduction into the metaphorical blood stream of the Antipodes. Eventually, however, it was essentially a process cyclical return to the broad experiences of the 19th Century - of overpowering, of colonization, missionary expansion, and finally an enthusiastic neurotic-psychotic enlistment in what became unashamedly expressed as a global crusade. And all of this was effected within an Aristotelian understanding of change according to fundamental causes: two states with a sense of fretful alienation within their geographic region as material cause; the formal cause provided by their learned dependency on a protector; the outbreak of World War II as efficient cause - from which extended their final cause - aim or purpose - dependent, obedient allies seeking redemption (security) from all the factors they saw their status as precluding. To emphasise, both generally had relatively normal nation-state neuroses and thus experienced anxiety, depression, and stress which, especially when heightened by immediate threat, created mental imbalances which impaired authentic local and temporal analyses. What is remarkable, however, is that, even after the specific threat had passed, there was no diminution of the neurosis; rather, it intensified, becoming a psychosis involving shared delusions of the self and hallucinations of the other-as-enemy.

At this point, two questions are prefigured: how did the condition described above happen, and what, specifically is its political character? In response to the first, it is essential to note that what was diffused, especially after the Fall of Singapore, was more than an instrumental mode of thinking and acting in time of war. In so many ways the fatal *idée fixe* of subordination to an alliance conforms to a virus – notably, it infects, reproduces, and evolves and depends on the host for reproduction.⁸ It was also quite clear that, whatever beneficial the virus might have had previously – and it is important to note that this can sometimes be the case – post-1945, both anti-bodies and vaccinations were non-existent to resist its basic pathology.

The pathology in question was a form of narcissism. And the narcissism in question was American Exceptionalism – a belief which, over time, grew into a national conceit that the United States was God-chosen to lead the world, and was, in every essential respect, indispensable: without it, the world lacked a lodestone to guide human progress. It presents in its host as egoism, vanity, selfishness, all of which in combination were understood by the ancient Greeks as hubris – an affliction of overwhelming pride and arrogance. The narcissist also receives a perverse benefit if the condition is allowed to reign untreated: it serves as an opiate, obviating the need for radical self-criticism. In a 2007 “elaborate systemic” review of the literature relating to the condition, Keith Campbell and Joshua Foster argued that narcissists possess the following “basic ingredients:”⁹

Positive: Narcissists think they are better than others.

Inflated: Narcissists' views tend to be contrary to reality. In measures that compare self-report to objective measures, narcissists' self-views tend to be greatly exaggerated.

⁸ L. P. Villarreal, *Viruses and the Evolution of Life* (Washington DC: ASM Press, 2005).

⁹ W. Keith Campbell and Joshua D. Foster, “The Narcissistic Self: Background, an Extended Agency Model, and Ongoing Controversies,” Chapter 6 in C. Sedikides and S. Spencer (eds.), *Frontiers in Social Psychology: The Self* (Philadelphia, PA: Psychology press, 2007), pp. 115-138, esp. 117 and 124.

- Agentic:** Narcissists' views tend to be most exaggerated in the agentic domain, relative to the communion domain
- Special:** Narcissists perceive themselves to be unique and special people.
- Selfish:** Research upon narcissists' behaviour in resource dilemmas supports the case for narcissists as being selfish.

In the case of Australia and New Zealand, the resultant condition after contact was determined by their state of mind at the time, a state of mind in chronically anxious in any case but, given the outbreak of war, in crisis, and even desperation, all which effectively reduced the cognitive horizon. Both countries, we should understand, shared the Pascalian terror of the "eternal silence of the infinite spaces," Bill Pearson capturing it in a stark passage:

. . . caught between the mountains and the sea, never far from the silence of the bush and the stars, we are in the bland frightening witness of the infinite, and we haven't created a social convention strong enough to reassure us. We live, as Anna Kavan said, "like reluctant campers too far from home."¹⁰

¹⁰ Bill Pearson, "Fretful Sleepers: A Sketch of New Zealand Behaviour and its Implications for the Artist," in Bill Pearson, *Fretful Sleepers and Other Essays* (Auckland: Heinemann, 1974), p. 28 (hereafter cited as Pearson, "Fretful Sleepers").

NOTE: Though the original publication date of this essay was over 61 years ago (in *Landfall*, September 1952), and much has changed, in some cases radically, in New Zealand and Australia in the intervening period, I have found this account to be inspirational in understanding ways of thinking and acting in both countries, even though, to labour the obvious, Pearson was concerned at the time only to address New Zealand. I will, therefore cite this source if I consider that, on the basis of similar conditions, his insights apply to Australia as well as New Zealand. To me, on the basis of many years of experience, teaching, and reflection, some identities are that strong. Notwithstanding this conviction, my repeated recourse to "Fretful Sleepers" is made in the knowledge that it could provoke the charge of appropriation; on the other hand, Oliver MacDonagh's eloquent pleading of a similar case remains with me: "There are times, there are conditions in which one's [academic] calling is subordinate."

What was at stake once the imperial promises of protection had been rendered empty by such catastrophes as the Fall of Singapore and the loss of the *Prince of Wales* and *Repulse* was salvation. And salvation required a saviour, no matter that, in the longer term, it might lead to a form of reckless endangerment.

As the study of religious doctrines of salvation (soteriology) make very clear, salvation is not extended gratuitously: if deliverance from suffering, forgiveness, or rebirth, is the objective, then the saviour inevitably demands a form of reconciliation which may take the form of good works, meditation, faith, the sacrifice of certain worldly attachments and relationships, service to a particular authority, virtue (however defined), frequently in combination. In World War II and especially subsequently, the disciplined life to be exacted was indistinguishable from Catholic soteriology, an extraordinary departure for a nation-state whose foundations owe so much to the Reformation and dissent against the Western Church of the Latin Rite. Specifically, the doctrine of alliance with the US demanded not only that allies have faith in the US - it could hardly be otherwise - but that regular, significant and frequent performances in the name of the alliance, and thus in praise of the United States, were essential to make the faith perfect, and ultimately, to put right the ally with the US. Faith, in the term Luther used it, was seen as a merely intellectual exercise, and therefore dismissed, as was his notion that good works were to be done out of gratitude to the saviour, but not as collateral for salvation. To emphasise, discretion and discernment, the essential elements of heresy (an act of choosing) as to how and what good works might be done were offences against this discipline because, undertaken spontaneously and naturally, they inadequately related to the gift provided by the saviour. Taken to its logical conclusion justification by faith alone (*solo fide*) was an error which obscured the still contingent nature of salvation.

What diffused without opposition to the Antipodean allies was, therefore, quite predictable: immediate gratitude for the relief of wartime

suffering heavily overlaid with a fear of abandonment. Infused within this condition was the Catholic distinction between the singers and the song, frail performers and the divine rhapsody: the evils committed by those within the Exception, even, or especially those in its government, or representative of it, are only aberrations which are easily explained in terms of human weakness and cannot and must not detract from the divinity of the mission. "Amazing Grace" had descended and was instilled by simplicity and repetition:

*Amazing grace!
How sweet the sound
That saved a wretch like me.
I once was lost, but now am found,
Was blind but now I see.*

The old, failed British Empire – the *Jerusalem* which the poet, William Blake, honoured as the pure and symbolic residence of humanity - was rejected; in its place was installed an America which expropriated biblical Israel and saw itself as New Zion charged with a Manifest Destiny according to, in Johan Galtung's formulation, a Manifest Theology.¹¹ The virus of delusionary exceptionalism was reproduced in the host with a reciprocal disorder entailing dependency and a loss of identity.

In a formal, conceptual sense this disorder conforms closely to the underlying demeanor of Australia in international politics that the former Secretary of the Department of Foreign Affairs, Alan Renouf, used as a central theme in his book, *The Frightened Country*;¹² equally, Bill Pearson's description of his fellow New Zealanders as "fretful sleepers" has a strong resonance

¹¹ Johan Galtung, "U.S. Foreign Policy as Manifest Theology," in Jongsuk Chay (ed.), *Culture and International Relations* (New York: Praeger, 1990), pp. 119 and 122 (hereafter cited as Galtung, "Manifest Theology").

¹² Alan Renouf, *The Frightened Country* (Melbourne: Macmillan, 1979).

here. And formally it is categorized as Dependent Personality Disorder, the symptoms of which include:¹³

Has difficulty making everyday decisions without an excessive amount of advice and reassurance from others

Needs others to assume responsibility for most major areas of his or her life

Avoidance of disagreeing with others for fear of losing their support or approval

Intense fear of abandonment and a sense of devastation or helplessness when relationships end; often move right into another relationship when one ends

Pessimism and lack of self-confidence, including a belief that they are unable to care for themselves

Placing the needs of their caregivers above their own

Has difficulty expressing disagreement with others because of fear of loss of support or approval

Has difficulty initiating projects or doing things on his or her own (because of a lack of self-confidence in judgment or abilities rather than a lack of motivation or energy)

Goes to excessive lengths to obtain nurturance and support from others, to the point of volunteering to do things that are unpleasant

Feels uncomfortable or helpless when alone because of exaggerated fears of being unable to care for himself or herself

Urgently seeks another relationship as a source of care and support when a close relationship ends

Is unrealistically preoccupied with fears of being left to take care of himself or herself

Over-sensitivity to criticism

¹³ Psych Central Staff, "Dependent Personality Disorder," pp. 1-2, <http://psychcentral.com/disorders/sx13.htm>, accessed 7 March 2013, and "Dependent Personality Disorder," http://my.clevelandclinic.org/disorders/personality_disorders/hic_dependent_personality_disorder.aspx, accessed 12 December 2011.

At times the condition is so pronounced that the observable symptoms are those of what is known as Dissociative Identity Disorder, a pathology in which the sufferer experiences “two clear identities or personality states, each of which has a fairly consistent way of viewing the and relating to the world.” Thus “frightened” Australia and “fretful” New Zealand can find themselves unrecognizable in the mirror when they are celebrated as close and victorious allies of the United States. Indeed, a phrase commonly used by Australian political leaders of late is that the country “punches above its weight” – a term referring to a boxer fighting successfully way above his weight division, which is to say in an alliance venture which would never have been entered into had the United States been absent from it. To this extent the true power-political position of the country is derealised by an illusion of agency; worse, the mechanisms by which the country travelled to this imagined state – most often by public deceit and illegality (national and international) – and the crude calculations of imagined advantage benefits which would flow from the US entered into consideration, become casualties of the necessary lapses in memory and blackouts in time.¹⁴

The Sacramental Alliance

What unifies both identities is need: the need for certainty in Kavan’s “bland frightening witness of the infinite,” the need for belief in denial of Morgenthau’s resigned pessimism that we live “under an empty sky from which the Gods have departed.” And that returns the discourse to faith – as the old Baltimore Catechism defined it – “an act of the intellect, prompted by the will, by which we believe” and accept as doctrine what is demanded in

¹⁴ This is just an indicative and truncated account of a far more complex phenomenon: for a slightly longer but manageable guide to DID see: “Dissociative Identity Disorder,” pp. 1-3. <http://www.medicine.net.com/script/main/art.asp?articlekey=101261&pf=3&page=1>, accessed 1 February 2010.

terms of authorised virtuous behaviour.¹⁵ In sum Australia and New Zealand (until its heretical rejection of nuclear doctrine in the mid-1980s, at which time it was excommunicated) converted to the global political theories, strategies, pronouncements, fiats of alliance with the US, a self-defined theocratic power. On closer examination it was, and remains, less New Zion, and more New Rome, provided one understands that, historically, Christianity cannot be usefully identified as *sui generis*; rather it must be understood as a transformational religion significantly derived from its roots and inspiration in pre-existing Judaism.

In doctrine the Catholic formula of ‘justification by faith’ has been addressed above, but the correspondences go way beyond this. The very term, “American Alliance,” is a misnomer unless it refers solely to a national church in communion with a wider body of belief and practice. In so doing it becomes clear that the system of US alliances is, multi-racial, multi-ethnic, and multi-national - literally, Catholic - which is to say universal. It’s presence extends, moreover, to cyber-space and outer space. For the pious nation-states, a range the full range of sacraments governs daily life (and death), and though all are relevant, in the interest of brevity only three - the Sacraments of Initiation - will be mentioned for the purposes of a brief indication of their presence. Accordingly, new states are approved and admitted (Baptism) to the body of practitioners through a variety of rituals requiring the renunciation of sin and the promise of fidelity. The Eucharist (to receive the body and blood of Christ *via* the transubstantiation of bread and wine) is achieved whenever the defining characteristics of the United States become part of the spirit and political body of an ally - an almost constant state of ingestion for most alliance members. Beyond Baptism, there is Confirmation, a formal anointing and recognition that a communicant is a true soldier of the Church, and more perfectly bound to it than previously; it

¹⁵ Peter Kreeft, “Justification by Faith,” CERC, <http://www.catholiceducation.org/articles/printarticle.html?id=60>, p. 2, accessed 8 June 2012.

is extended as a gift of special strength and obligates the receiver to defend the faith by word and deed. Accepting the sacraments (foreign and military aid, favourable weapons purchasing arrangements, training and exchange opportunities, etc.) enhances the prospect of salvation. Refusing the sacraments is a decision to live outside the church in that condemned, terroristic state expressed in Cyprian of Carthage's 3rd Century axiom, *extra Ecclesiam nulla salus* ('outside the Church there is no salvation').

Terroristic Obedience and the Abnegation of Knowledge

Given that faith is the *sine qua non* of the alliance, argument based on the Enlightenment tradition of institutionalised skepticism, theory, evidence and logic is, at best, epiphenomenal: no more than of secondary interest and thus irrelevant. To maintain the metaphor, Australia (and New Zealand, for that matter) are disinterested in what might be termed "critical theology." The degree of default in Australia is quite extraordinary when it is considered that there is no dedicated research centre for US domestic and international studies at any of the country's 38 universities; of equal concern there are extremely few courses on US foreign and domestic politics at these universities. Even the country's premier research university - the Australian National University, with some 21 centres undertaking research and offering courses in International Relations and / or Strategic Studies, and in receipt of millions of dollars in government funding for specified policy areas - has never bothered to develop such a dedicated capability throughout its more than 60 years of existence.¹⁶ Over time, it would seem, ignorance of the US has become an administrative policy and a political-intellectual virtue. At the same time, numerous attempts have been made and continue for the purposes of making Australia "Asia literate," a project which is inescapably

¹⁶ The writer acknowledges the existence of the United States Studies Centre at the University of Sydney but also acknowledges that it reflects its origins as a very well-funded attempt by certain wealthy patrons to establish it as, basically, a public relations and propaganda instrument of Australia-US relations, as opposed to a centre with academic and educational interests, objectives and modes of inquiry that are shared by, and is the general tradition of the other areas at the University.

linked to the tensions between China and the United States and which constitutes Australia's greatest strategic nightmare.

The United States is therefore understood superficially, as one might understand a place through its popular culture and public relations. At times the ignorance is so overpowering that the US that is understood is no more real than James Hilton's mystical, harmonious valley, Shangri La. As Lewis Lapham, then editor of *Harper's Magazine*, so caustically observed, the denial of historical knowledge encourages the proliferation of hypocrisies in the US itself, and these are of monumental dimensions, proclaiming as they do:

. . . rose-coloured images of the American paradise shaped by the milk-white hand of Providence, the citadel of virtue and the ark of innocence, a nation so favoured by God . . . that it never killed a buffalo or a Cherokee Indian, never ran a gambling casino or lynched a Negro or bribed a judge or elected a President as stupid as Warren Harding. And because it had behaved itself so well (always doing right, always dressed for church), it had become a land entirely overgrown with honeysuckle, where the urban poor go quietly off to reservations in Utah and nobody . . . fornicates on Sunday afternoons.

In Australia the result is a compounded fiction, American Exceptionalism being nothing more, nor less, than a fiction in the first instance - indeed, it doesn't even qualify as mythical - but it supports a superstructure which is at least mythical or legendary to such an extent that, neither America's past, with its record of illegal invasions, atrocities, and failures, nor its present is allowed to inhibit the breeding and furnishing of comforting fantasies. Absent from contemporary discussion of, and debate about the alliance in Australia is just about every well-documented pathology of the country and its military which have a bearing on the character of the relationship (except, and then only occasionally, the problems associated with buying US weapons and equipment): general social and political decline (which includes explicit appeals for the need for plutocracy; widespread

ignorance of world affairs among presidential candidates and, in several cases, claims of conversations with, and patronage by God); the general descent of the US into undemocratic government and governance; the particular descent into undemocratic government which results from National Defense Authorization Act, Section 1021(b)(2); gun violence; unconstitutional assassinations; unconstitutional war; internationally illegal war; war atrocities; war crimes (including torture); military support for known terrorist organisations (MEK in Iran for example); the military's "spiritual fitness" programme; religious intolerance in the military; and the ongoing epidemics of rape in the military, and suicide among serving members and veterans.

To all of these the mainstream Australian response has been silence. It is as though the axiom of Sun Tzu – that you should know yourself (and therefore your allies) – if you would be undefeated in war, is an irrelevancy, something spoken in a tongue incapable of translation.¹⁷ This state of "dumb amaze" remained unruffled even by the conclusion of the National Intelligence Council's 2012 report, *Global Trends 2030: Alternative Worlds*: US power is in terminal decline.¹⁸ Nothing, it seems is capable of disturbing, or is allowed to disturb Australia's steady state of denial and dissociation which, nearly eighty years ago, Orwell outlined regarding a corresponding state of affairs:

Actions are held to be good or bad, not on their own merits, but according to who does them. There is almost no kind of outrage, torture, imprisonment without trial, assassination, and bombing of civilians, which does not change its moral color when it is committed by our side. The nationalist not only does not disapprove of atrocities

¹⁷ The writer is aware that the axiom also requires the diligent strategic actor to know his enemy as well.

¹⁸ National Intelligence Council, *Global Trends 2030: Alternative Worlds*, NIC 2012-001 (Washington, DC.: Office of the Director of National Intelligence, 2012).

committed by his own side, he has remarkable capacity for not even hearing about them.

At a higher level of understanding this raises the following question for Australia (and, ultimately, New Zealand): is the country epiphany-resistant, or has it experienced something like a “black epiphany”? To elaborate by way of further questions: if the catalogue of crime, pathology, and incompetence of US actually exists – and the evidence is overwhelming that it does – then why has there been no moment of striking realization that would allow Australia to understand the alliance from a new and deeper perspective than before which would allow its diminution, or even abandonment? Or is it the case that 1942 was an epiphany, a moment of religious revelation, in which the godhead was revealed? And what it revealed was the radiated truth of the God of the Old Testament which inspired both in the follower and in itself a new and heightened sense of consciousness in which scrutability gives way to obedience? Such an outcome accords with the standard expectation that an epiphany effects a change of heart, or dramatic reversal, because 1942 forced upon Australia and New Zealand a recognition of the fact that their international political and strategic conditions were changed, and thus their view of themselves.

Beyond the Black Epiphany

To live within the new dispensation required not just that the US be indulged in world politics, but that Australia and New Zealand become concelebrants with the US in whatever crusade it decided upon. This gave a certain legitimacy to the former and a sense of superiority to the latter. Just as Christianity would never jettison all of its Judaic heritage, the new alliance tradition selectively retained what was thought to contribute to the identity of its members. Immediately sanctified, therefore, were key events (campaigns, battles, events) of the old imperial period, no matter that the principal campaign was disastrously and deceitfully conceived, incompetently executed, and a strategic failure of considerable proportions, or that it was

part of a chronic sequence of such events. The landing in the Dardanelles, in April 1915, is a case in point: one of many schemes devised by the so-called iconic Winston Churchill, who was held contemporaneously by his peers (ambassadors, private secretaries, generals, air marshals) to be “a demagogue, a bluffer, an incompetent, and an inebriate.” As Lord Hankey wrote, in 1941, of his experience over three decades with him:

[H]e is not what he thinks himself, a great master of the art of war. Up to now he has never brought off any great military enterprise. However, defensible they may have been, Antwerp, Gallipoli, and the expedition to help the White Russians at the end of the last war were all failures. He made some frightful errors of judgment between the two wars in military matters, e.g. obstructing the construction of new ships in 1925 . . . his false estimates of the value of French generals & French military methods . . . It was he who forces us into the Norwegian affair which failed; the Greek affair which failed; and the Cretan affair which is failing.¹⁹

And the term “iconic” is ironic, for it too often obscures the explicit support that Churchill, as a member of the Tory establishment, was until well into the 1930s, pro-Nazi, pro-Fascist, pro-Confederacy, and explicitly and consistently racist (well beyond the World War II itself).²⁰ It serves also to reduce his personality which Hitchens, in reviewing several biographies of Churchill, and histories of his times, is that of a “vaulting prince of opportunists.”²¹ And finally, it condemns to forgetfulness the significant role that he and British Foreign Secretary, Sir Edward Grey, as a minority in the Liberal Government’s cabinet in 1914, played in persuading their colleagues to go to war. Although, publicly, it was justified by the need to carry out the

¹⁹ Lord Hankey, as cited in Christopher Hitchens, *Love, Poverty, and War: Journeys and Essays* (New York: Nation Books, 2004), pp. 17-18 (hereafter cited as Hitchens, *Love, Poverty & War*).

²⁰ Ibid, pp. 12-14.

²¹ Ibid, p. 15.

obligations of solemn treaties and agreements, it was in reality a decision based on the tawdry domestic political calculation that it would keep the Tory opposition from Government.²²

More than anything else, the fact that Churchill's actions are judged by his wartime reputation as a leader, rather than the other way around, almost disappears the blood sacrifice to be found in his defeats. And yet they, too, are as tawdry as his fulminations in 1914, as indicated by his "hysterical" February 1942 cable to General Wavell "about the unthinkable prospect of the loss of Singapore:"

There must at this stage be no thought of saving the troops or sparing the population. The battle must be fought to the bitter end at all costs Commanders and senior officers should die with their troops. The honour of the British Empire and of the British Army is at stake. I rely on you to show no mercy in any form. With the Russians fighting as they are and the Americans so stubborn at Luzon, the whole reputation of our country and our race is involved.²³

This, it should be noted, was in the context of Churchill's belief that the soldiers he required to fight "to the bitter end" were insufficiently worthy for the great deeds and great sacrifices that were expected of them. Specifically, he was "hoping, in his own words, to impress the Americans by a great human sacrifice."²⁴ That his order was countermanded by the Allied Supreme Commander in Southeast Asia, General Archibald Wavell was, overall, of little consolation: the General Officer Commanding Malaya, Lieutenant-General Percival, was a career officer who had never commanded an Army Corps, fought for a time (at the cost of 2,500 dead and 1,400

²² For an account of this, see: Niall Ferguson, *The Pity of War* (New York and London: Penguin, 1998).

²³ Christopher Hitchens, *Blood, Class and Empire: The Enduring Anglo-American Relationship* (London: Atlantic Books, 2006), p. 213.

²⁴ Hitchens, *Love, Poverty & War*, p. 19.

wounded amongst the Australians) then, with Wavell's consent, surrendered, to become a Prisoner of War, and with him, 100,000, including 15,000 Australians, in what Churchill described as the "worst disaster" and "greatest capitulation" in British history.²⁵

It was also in the context of a Churchillian disposition of an entirely sinister character – namely, *via* appeasement of Hirohito, to close off the supply routes through Burma for the Nationalist Chinese resistance to Japan, and then to barter away the imperial periphery, in dealings with Roosevelt and Hitler, Northern Ireland, the Falkland Islands, the Channel Islands, Malta, Gibraltar, and British colonies in Africa and the Caribbean.²⁶ The particular case of the Australia - Great Britain relationship of the late 1930s and early 1940s is to the point. In return for Australia's commitment to Britain's defence in 1939, the latter promised to defend Australia from any Japanese attack with little real thought or concern for the possibility of it ever being implemented. When, however, such a guarantee was required to be implemented, Churchill not only tried to prevent substantial American forces being set to the Pacific, but even attempted to delay the repatriation of Australian troops to a country that was basically defenceless before the advancing Japanese forces. To the Australian (Labor) Government of the time the British decisions of 1942 which determined the fall of Singapore, and thus the peril which Australia faced, were an 'inexcusable betrayal'.²⁷ Even US General Douglas MacArthur, Supreme Commander of Allied Forces in the Southwest Pacific Area from April 1942, thought the abandonment of British promises to the Dominions reeked of treachery.²⁸

²⁵ Winston Churchill, *The Hinge of Fate*, Vol. 4 (New York: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 1986), p. 81

²⁶ Hitchens, *Love, Poverty & War*, pp. 18-21.

²⁷ D. Day, *The Great Betrayal: Britain, Australia and the Onset of the Pacific War*, Angus and Robertson, Sydney, 1988, (esp. p. 351).

²⁸ *Ibid.*

Such perfidy, nevertheless, would seem to have been a matter of policy for Great Britain. According to papers captured from the British steamer *Automedon* by the Germans, after they had sunk it off the Nicobar Islands in November 1940, the British War Cabinet had by that date already abandoned any hope of saving Singapore and Malaya in the event of a Japanese attack, and were communicating this to their Commander-in-Chief, Far East, Air Chief Marshall Sir Robert Brooke-Popham. Churchill was thus not only aware that this secret would soon be passed to Japan but decided that the loss of the documents was so sensitive that it, too, was a secret, and so allowed Australia to continue pouring reinforcements into Singapore.²⁹

For those in Australia who hoped that the future might be an improvement on the past, the Vietnam War was a reminder that, though alliance leaders might change, their behaviour remains constant. Thus, as in 1914, the public rationale for the necessity of war was to be found in a politically defensible *mélange* which consisted of the racist mechanics of the “Domino Theory,” a fear of “wars of national liberation” in Southeast Asia, and the containment of China, the principle concern of the United States was, according the Secretary of Defense, Robert McNamara, that South Vietnam be “regarded as a test case” that “would demonstrate the will and the ability of the United States . . . as the most powerful nation in the world . . . to have its way in world affairs.” And this indeed was what the Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security Affairs, John T. McNaughton, outlined in a now infamous memorandum in 1964.

The objective often attributed to the US - that South Vietnam should enjoy a “better freer, way of life” - was barely a priority at all, being accorded only 10 percent of the overall rationale.³⁰ But this was only part of a

²⁹ J. Rusbridger & E. Nave, *Betrayal at Pearl harbour: How Churchill Lured Roosevelt into WWII*, (Summit, New York, 1991), pp. 99-106.

³⁰ *The Pentagon Papers*, as published by *The New York Times* (New York: Bantam, 1971), p. 255. The citation regarding South Vietnam being a “test case” is from a McNamara document; the other citations relating to this footnote are provided from the text of those who authored the commentary on *The Pentagon Papers*.

transformation by McNamara to thinking and behaving according to a script by Churchill: in his memoirs and other published works he locates his conclusion that the war was “militarily unwinnable” in 1965–1966, even as early as 1964, but there is no record of him ever communicating his pessimisms and misgivings to the President. What is on record are his memoranda – such as the one jointly written with National Security Adviser, McGeorge Bundy, on 27 January 1965, before the full extent of the US troop build-up, and before the (Australian) National Service Act (1964) had been amended to require conscripts to serve overseas – recommending that the President pursue a military solution in Vietnam.³¹ It should be noted that, when he left office in 1968 US casualties numbered some 25,000; in the period of his continuing silence through to the end of the War, they increased by another 23,000.³² In Australia the figures were 209 dead and over 1,500 wounded.

Whether public candour at the highest levels of the US Government, or among its former highest office-holders would have made any difference is a matter of conjecture. As the official histories of the war, and numerous other commentaries make clear, by the time that McNamara had become privately pessimistic, the repeated overtures made by the Australian Government of R.G. Menzies demonstrate that its Dependent Personality Disorder was well established. The Coalition Government of R.G. Menzies not only was frequently prone to demanding that the war be fought with greater force levels than the US thought prudent or necessary, but also resorted to dishonesty concerning the nature of the request by the Government of South Vietnam to provide military force to its country, an example then followed by the Hawke Labor Government in respect of the Gulf War of 1990-1991, and

³¹ George Ball, “The Rationalist in Power,” a review of Deborah Shapley, *Promise and Power: The Life and Times of Robert McNamara* (New York: Little Brown, 1993), *The New York Review of Books*, 22 April 1993, p. 35.

³² Deborah Shapley, “McNamara’s Inner War,” *The Bulletin of Atomic Scientists*, July/August 1995, p. 14.

the Howard Coalition Government in relation to the following Gulf War of 2003-2011.

The period 1914-2013 marks the ascendancy of blood sacrifice in Australian and New Zealand history and identity construction. Convergence with the US is close. Both, now, have well-established Cults of the Dead which, instead of, or in addition to, honouring those killed in the defence of the nation, now act to inspire others to replicate the fate of the fallen. In parallel, Australia, a far less religious country than the United States, has now nevertheless sanctified its dead, its wounded, its veterans, and all serving members of the Australian Defence Force. President Obama provides the American strand with his Memorial Day speech in 2011 in which he celebrates the bonds of “honor and sacrifice” in America’s cause across the generations, by reproducing a passage in a letter to him from the Gold Star parents of a slain Lieutenant; it’s from the Book of Isaiah:

When I heard the voice of the Lord saying, “Whom shall I send? And who will go for us? And I said, “Here I am. Send me!”³³

In Australia, the second strand has been evident for some time, as Richard White observed the process of ANZAC Day observance in the period to 1980:

In time it developed a common form of observance, complete with a semi-religious ritual, liturgy and hymnal, perhaps filling a spiritual need in a secularized society.³⁴

³³ The White House, Office of the Press Secretary, “Remarks by the President at a Memorial Day Service,” 30 May 2011.

³⁴ Richard White, *Inventing Australia* (Sydney: George Allen & Unwin, 1988), p. 136.

Well into the 21st Century, the process remained resistant to all forms of evidence and just unstoppable to the point where several scholars felt moved to produce two volumes for the general citizen-reader which might cause them to re-think the “fictionalized exaggerations” and the disregarding of “inconvenient historical truths” which contribute to a dangerous and conceited sense of the national self.³⁵ The term “ANZAC” (the mnemonic used to denote the Australian and New Zealand Army Corps in World War I) he writes, became “sacred and legally protected under various Acts in 1920.”³⁶ To phrase it in other words, war, for Australia, was, and remains an act of sacred fulfillment, the efficient cause in the pursuit of full communion with the world of states. Its dead are a blood sacrifice, offered not so much to assuage an angry God, but as a deposit of national treasury without which claims to nationhood and, more importantly, faithful ally, could never have been taken seriously, akin to a putative Catholic seeking redemption on the solely on the basis of declared faith.

The Conservation of Ignorance and Belief

For the belief in security guarantors and the alliance with the United States to have survived as the foundation of Australian defence and foreign policy for so long requires, in the first instance, that the citizenry of Australia accept its essential irrelevance when it comes voicing its concerns. It was advised to do this in 1938 by the Minister for Defence, Harold Thorby, and has seldom strayed from the recommended path despite the revolutions in the availability of information which have taken place since. Then, he addressed the public in terms that were condescending but which nevertheless required its fealty, by discernment or good will if possible, or by threats failing that. Indeed, at other times in history Thorby’s directive could

³⁵ Craig Stockings (ed.), *Zombie Myths of Australian Military History: The 10 Myths That will Not Die* (Sydney: University of New South Wales Press, 2010), and Craig Stockings (ed.), *ANZAC’s Dirty Dozen: 12 Myths of Australian Military History* (Sydney: University of New South Wales Press, 2012), hereafter cited as Stockings, *ANZAC’s Dirty Dozen*.

³⁶ Stockings, *ANZAC’s Dirty Dozen*, p. 291.

have been the exemplary content in a Papal Encyclical: he appealed to “all loyal Australians to refrain from entering into controversy through the press, over the air, or from public platforms, on the present delicate international situation.” He continued:

It would be fully appreciated by the public that it was unpracticable for the public to be fully informed on these delicate international discussions, which were generally based upon secret information which could not be made available to the public, but which were available for the guidance of Governments.

We, the Government, have vital information which we cannot disclose. It is upon this knowledge that we make our decisions. You, who are merely private citizens, have not access to this information. Any criticism you make of our policy, any controversy about it in which you may indulge, will therefore be uninformed and valueless. If, in spite of your ignorance, you persist in questioning our policy, we can only conclude that you are disloyal.³⁷

The maintenance of belief then requires not only that ignorant belief and faith be maintained, but that contending claims to the truth be discounted. Although the three formal declarations of *nihil obstat*, *imprimi potest*, and the *imprimatur*, are not to be found in the processes governing publication of documents and works on Australian foreign and defence policy, they exist in practice.³⁸ Neither Menzies with Vietnam, nor Hawke

³⁷ As cited in W. Macmahon Ball, *Press, Radio and World Affairs* (Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 1938), pp. 32-33.

³⁸ *Nihil obstat* (Latin for "nothing hinders" or "nothing stands in the way") is a declaration of no objection to an initiative or an appointment. Apart from this general sense, the phrase is used more particularly to mean an "attestation by a church censor that a book contains nothing damaging to faith or morals" The *Censor Librorum* delegated by a bishop of the Catholic Church reviews the text in question, but the *nihil obstat* is not a certification that those granting it agree with the contents, opinions or statements expressed in the work; instead, it merely confirms "that it contains nothing contrary to faith or morals." The *nihil obstat* is the first step in having a book published under Church auspices. If the author is a member of a religious institute and if the book is on questions of religion or morals, the book must also obtain the *imprimi potest* ("it can be printed") of the major superior. The final approval is given through the *imprimatur* ("let it be printed") of the author's bishop or of the bishop of the place of publication.

with the Gulf War of 1990-1991 trusted the governed with a truthful account of the country's involvement in the respective wars; rather, it took the Whitlam Labor Government and the forensic work of a journalist, respectively, to give the lie to the original accounts. Where authors were so impudent as to have their works critical of the approved standard version of events published, they could be met with the full fury of the establishment and recourse to the *Index Librorum Prohibitorum* of the Inquisition, a list of works considered a source of danger to the faith and morals of true believers, and still being published by the Vatican up until 1948. A case in point was Robert Graves 1929 memoir of World War I, *Goodbye to All That*, in which he attempted to tell the truth about the conditions endured by the men in the trenches. The book was also an attack on the way the senior officers treated the lower ranks and was followed by books by other junior officers who supported the claims made by Graves. What gave the greatest offence, however, was that Graves recorded a boastful Australian admission of atrocities committed against German prisoners. Regardless of the truth of the matter, the response of the Returned Services League was to discuss "setting up a censorship against authors of war books who defame Australian soldiers."³⁹

The specific requirement, therefore, is for the acceptable texts of national narratives and discussions of war to be privileged. The approved discourse in this context accords with the brief definition of "rule-governed knowledge: as Graeme Turner has argued, certain texts are "elected" on the grounds of bearing witness to those dominant, or "preferred meanings" which establish an apparently transparent, unmediated historical reality when, inescapably, they are transformation.⁴⁰ Notwithstanding contending narratives, usually at the margins, the dominant discourse is by definition

³⁹ As cited in Robin Gerster, *Big-Noting: The Heroic Theme in Australian War Writing* (Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 1987), p. 118.

⁴⁰ Graeme Turner, *National Fictions: Literature, Film, and the Construction of Australian Narrative* (Sydney: Allen & Unwin, 1986), pp. 6-9 and 107 (hereafter cited as Turner, *National Fictions*).

consensually agreed at the popular level and care is taken to ensure that, as befits a custom made garment of singular importance based on myth, fraying seams are reinforced and loose threads removed by whatever means are available. This is discourse in action: the deliberate forgetting of social and political events, aided and abetted by those whose interests are served by the persistent evasion of reality, so as to constitute a security culture fundamentalism of noxious certitude and consoling balm against uncertainty and angst, for the credulous. The resulting state of mind denies paradox and ambiguity and borders on, where it does not spill over, into a fascist certainty which insists, *inter alia*, “that the death of our own does not originate with ourselves . . . [but] is a reluctant response to violence that originates beyond group borders, that is, with others.”⁴¹

Conclusion: Repressive Tolerance, Viral Dominance, and the Triumph of Belief

Those who find this discourse to be, at the very least, unconvincing or, more accurately, dangerous, are clearly trapped: in what passes for a liberal-democracy, but which is, in fact, just another form of unrepresentative electoral democracy, they have no constitutional means of forcing a debate on the alliance in the theoretical, historical, and empirical terms that, ostensibly, that society claims to encourage. At the same time, critics and dissenters, are required to respect and tolerate what is by these criteria and processes a regime of misery and radical evil. In no small way is this a tyranny of the majority, but it is presented as an intellectual and political virtue when, also in fact, it is the production and reproduction of the “systematic mornonization of children and adults alike by publicity and propaganda.” At its core is a ridiculous, violent inversion which, nearly five decades ago,

⁴¹ Carolyn Marvin and David Ingle, *Blood Sacrifice and the Nation: Totem Rituals and the American Flag* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), p. 12.

Herbert Marcuse argued is a form of tolerance which is repressive.⁴²

Tolerance is turned from an active in to a passive state, from practice to non-practice: laissez faire the constituted authorities. It is the people who tolerate the government, which in turn tolerates opposition within the framework determined by the constituted authorities.⁴³

To the extent that critics and dissenters accept this regime of tolerance they are, of course, wittingly or unwittingly, complicit in its perpetuation, and the witness to this is the proliferation of pamphleteering, protesting, letter-writing, teach-ins, badge-wearing, prayer vigils, etc., etc., that have absolutely no effect on policy, let alone government. The vast “epistemic communities” which Peter Haas conceptualized, to the extent that they advocated progressive change are similarly discounted, neither their acknowledged expertise, nor their interconnectedness, nor their shared normative values and beliefs have had a substantial effect. If anything, their existence is proof only that the critics and dissenters in question have become domesticated and the indulgences they are extended simply occludes their servitude. This state of self-delusion will only change when the critics and dissenters “make the transition from word to deed, from speech to action.” Until then, they will “suffer established policies” and the slaughter and the torture will continue. Until then, they will likewise engage in the farcically described “marketplace of ideas” under the historical, liberal-utopian illusion that the truth will triumph: it seldom does because the consumers in the market are for the most part ignorant and have become accustomed to debates in which sense and nonsense are treated equally and so have little capacity for discernment. They have also been taught to be suspicious of, or bored with anything requiring their constant attention which cannot be related to immediate gratification, or

⁴² Herbert Marcuse, “Repressive Tolerance,” in: Robert Paul Wolff, Barrington Moore, jr., and Herbert Marcuse, *A Critique of Pure Tolerance* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1969, pp. 95-137, as extracted on <http://www.marcuse.org/herbert/pubs/60spubs/65repressivetolerance.htm>, accessed 5 November 2012.

⁴³ Ibid, pp. 1-2.

ongoing satisfaction.⁴⁴

Even for the duly diligent, the effort of engagement is seldom available within the strictures of neoliberal employment. In any case, power, contrary to the old Quaker commitment to speak truth to it, is essentially uninterested in it. What it will do, however, is pay sufficient attention to its advocates, within the regime of tolerance just described, and according to the scripts of approved political theatre, to prevent them from becoming truly politically effective.

Such an outcome speaks to the receptivity of the host to the diffusion of the virus which is the focus in this paper. In so many ways the infection which followed World War II was, strictly speaking, a rediffusion and reinfection of the pathogen which was imperial thinking and practice under the British Empire. Just as being imperial requires the presence of a pathological conceit on the part of the imperial power that it is superior and should rule over others, being part of the empire requires an abasement in the colony such that it learns to accept its inferior position *vis-à-vis* the center. Over time, the instinct to genuflect and the identity disorder which comes from consensual inferiority are difficult to unlearn (always supposing there is a willingness to do so in the first place). The host might be providing healthy habitat for the virus, but its strategic imagination is weak in, and of itself.

Given the terror of true independence and sovereignty which Anna Kavan portrayed, the broad infection of the Australian and New Zealand bodies politic by the diffusion of the alliance virus conformed to at least three of the well-known characteristics of viruses in general. The first is that neither country has generated an immune response capable of eliminating it, nor has it seen fit to develop and produce a political vaccine capable of conferring an artificially acquired immunity to it. Second, because viruses use vital metabolic pathways within host cells to replicate, they are difficult to

⁴⁴ Ibid, pp. 3-6.

eliminate without using drugs that cause toxic effects to host cells in general. The whole national security, defence, and foreign policy orientation, infrastructure – indeed, its *animus* – is alliance-centred and sustained: the prospect of alliance-excision generates a fear akin to being faced with castration. Finally, since the range of structural and political effects that the alliance virus has on the Australian host is extensive, and since these replicate regardless of the wishes of the host, the two most confident predictions that can be made are that either the virus will continue to thrive while the host declines; alternatively, given the state of the United States itself, the potency of the virus will decline and in so doing will allow the host to recover, almost by default. The first is the more likely: regardless of the potency of the virus over time, the host now possesses such a compromised political system that it is incapable of resisting further infections.