
REVIEWS

Henry S. Albinski, *The Australian-American Security Relationship: A Regional and International Perspective*. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1982. Pp. 257, index. \$32.50

A reviewer always approaches Albinski's contributions to United States-Australian relations with a deep sense of peace. One knows in advance that his work will be balanced, lucid, and monumentally researched. It will also typically be characterized by a breadth of understanding and sympathy displayed to date by scarcely any other worker in this particular vineyard. When it comes to explaining Canberra, Wellington, and Washington to one another, Albinski is virtually the only game in town.

All these qualities are evident in *The Australian-American Security Relationship*. It has, in addition, the peculiarly gratifying merit of adding an unexpected and highly interesting dimension to a story all too familiar in most of its aspects. The ANZUS Treaty has already been worked over in all its implications probably more assiduously and less profitably than any other international contract. Albinski's specific achievement is to have examined the security relationship in a truly global context, from the South Pacific to South Africa. He has produced what undoubtedly should be the definitive text on the subject, at least until his next book comes out.

A major criticism of the present work is that it seems indeed to have been conceived all too literally as a textbook. It reads at times like a transcript of lectures, which is the least inspiring form of presentation imaginable. "We open our study," Albinski informs us on the first page. "Our interest," we are reminded on p. 86, "lies primarily in assessing" a particular aspect. And on p. 106 we "conclude this chapter with a consideration." More seriously, Albinski seems to have gone to all lengths to avoid introducing any material or reflections that might be remotely controversial, or that might even suggest that any controversy actually exists. This might not be a bad idea when writing -about foreign countries which one hopes to revisit, but it positively distorts reality when controversy is a basic element in the issues under discussion. Relations between Canberra and Wellington are, for instance, conditioned fundamentally by the fact that Prime Ministers J. Malcolm Fraser and Robert Muldoon are personally antagonistic on almost every significant issue. It is also highly revela-

tory that Australian-United States military cooperation after the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan took the form of Canberra's refusing to perform services which Washington desired, and insisting instead on Washington's accepting less hazardous services which it did not particularly want. Nor can any consideration of intra-ASEAN military cooperation be complete without some allusion to Thai distrust of Malaysian views on Moslem insurgency and Malaysian conviction of Thai ineptitude in dealing with Communist insurgency. And it certainly needs to be indicated that the whole nature of the ANZUS relationship could be altered radically by the fact that the Australian Labor Party, which is very likely to be in office after the next federal election, contains powerful factions which are anti-American, anti-Israel, and anti-uranium; and the New Zealand Labor Party, which is just as likely to be in office after the next election in that country, is committed to a downgrading of the military relevance of ANZUS.

Two possibly less important matters of fact also deserve mention. Albinski asserts that Australia and New Zealand "cooperate closely in arranging their respective programs" of aid to the South Pacific. But the Chairman of the Parliamentary Joint Committee on Foreign Affairs and Defense testified last year that Canberra and Wellington regrettably do not in fact coordinate their aid programs to the region. What has been happening is that Australia has had perforce to assume a greater proportion of the aid burden as New Zealand's economic situation continues to deteriorate, so that Polynesian microstates like Tonga and Samoa, which would naturally have looked to Wellington for assistance, are becoming increasingly reliant upon Canberra. And South African Prime Minister Pieter W. Botha's concept of the *Konstellasie van State* might initially have hoped "to draw the RSA, the independent 'homeland' states and surrounding nations into a more structured economic relationship (p. 163)." But it was then found necessary to devise a separate confederal system to incorporate the Homelands, as the black National States refused to recognize them as being genuine sovereignties in their own right. "Surrounded" is incidentally a more appropriate term than "surrounding" to convey the situation of Botswana, Lesotho, and Swaziland vis-à-vis the Republic.

On the purely technical side, it is unfortunate that Albinski's breathtakingly comprehensive documentation has not been organized into a bibliography. Students of the topic are going to have to use this book for the foreseeable future, and a bibliography would have made the indispensable that much more accessible.

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