The dramatic impact of the 11 September 2001 attacks on New York and Washington sharply intensified relations between Australia and the USA. The bilateral relationship was reconfirmed as the two states joined in war against an elusive, and unexpected, enemy. As the war on terrorism broadened, Australia enthusiastically joined the so-called 'coalition of the willing', sending troops to fight in Afghanistan and, more controversially, deploying forces alongside the USA in the invasion and occupation of Iraq. From late 2001 commentary in Australia invariably accepted that 'relations with the United States dominated Australian foreign affairs' (O'Connor...
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2004: 207) or more subtly observed that 'the central dynamics of Australian foreign policy revolved around the issue of relations with the superpower, and the implications of this relationship' for the broader exercise of Australian foreign policy (McDonald 2005b: 153). This deepening bilateral association hinged on the level and character of Australia's role in the US-led and defined 'war on terrorism'. Yet John Howard's government had also to manage Australia's interests in a variety of other areas, especially in East and South-East Asia, where US leadership or identification with American policy was widely understood as undermining Australia's pursuit of its separate regional interests. Surprisingly, Australia's anxious and seemingly unqualified embrace of the American alliance against terrorism complicated, but did not permanently compromise, Australia's complex multilayered relationships with other states in the Asia-Pacific region, including the crucial Muslim state in the region, Indonesia, as well as China and Japan.

In 2001 Prime Minister Howard visited each of Australia's major international partners: the USA, Japan, China, and Indonesia. While anxious to maintain strong relationships with East Asia and to rebuild relations with Indonesia in the wake of the East Timor dispute, Washington remained at the centre of Howard's foreign policy agenda. Australian strategic planning complemented US planning under the so-called 'Powell doctrine': it expected that regional allies contribute 'on the ground' to any US-led coalition and sought to ensure that the USA had the strategic capacity to successfully wage war in two regional conflicts simultaneously (Hancher 2001). Consistent with this doctrine Colin Powell had, before the Senate committee responsible for his confirmation as Secretary of State, praised Australia's 'role in Indonesia' (that is, in East Timor 1998-2000) and had anticipated an expanded regional role for the junior alliance partner. The Howard Government was acutely aware of the lessons of the East Timor operation for the American alliance. Its 2000 Defence White Paper stressed the need for a balance between self-reliance and maintenance of the ANZUS treaty (DOD 2000).

Immediately after the George W Bush administration came to office it elevated Australia's status as a partner in the Asia-Pacific. At the Australia-United States Ministerial Consultations (AUSMIN) talks in July 2001 the two powers agreed to further extend intelligence sharing and strengthen interoperability of their defence forces. These decisions foreshadowed, and made more effective, military and covert security cooperation between the two nations in the immediate aftermath of 11 September. If Australia accepted that military-strategic-intelligence planning must be more closely dovetailed with American planning, it was publicly unenthusiastic about US suggestions for a more elaborate alliance structure in East Asia. The new Bush administration's efforts to strengthen and coordinate its three key bilateral Asia-Pacific alliances-those with Japan, Korea, and Australia-were carefully deflected by the Howard Government (Tow 2003). Sensitive to China's fears of containment by a web
of US-dominated regional alliances, and aware of regional disquiet about its so-called role as Australia's deputy sheriff in the Asia-Pacific, Australia let the American proposal evaporate. At the same time, however, Canberra exhibited renewed enthusiasm for negotiating a bilateral free trade agreement as the USA explored the prospects for a series of trans-Pacific free trade arrangements to balance a Free Trade Area of the Americas (Higley 2001).

11 SEPTEMBER 2001

More than any crisis since war in Vietnam, the cataclysmic events of 11 September 2001 exposed Australia to the implications and obligations of its long-standing security alliance with the USA under the ANZUS agreement. Coincidentally, Howard was in Washington on an official state visit at the time of the attacks on New York and Washington. In contrast to his uncomfortable association with President Bill Clinton, Howard was at ease with and warmly welcomed by the conservative new Republican President, Bush, and senior administration officials, including Powell and Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld. Howard reasserted the importance of the bilateral relationship in words that were to be immediately tested by the dramatic terror attacks the following day. 'Of all the nations that we value and whose friendship we cherish', the Prime Minister stated, 'there's no relationship more natural, more easy and one more deeply steeped in shared experience in common aspiration for the kind of world we want our children to grow up in than the relationship between Australia and the United States' (Shanahan 2001).
The events of 11 September curtailed Howard's official visit. On his return to Australia, Parliament invoked the ANZUS treaty. For the first time since it was agreed fifty years earlier, the now bilateral treaty was activated. The traumatic events of 11 September, the Australian Parliament proclaimed, 'constituted an attack on the United States of America within the meaning of the ANZUS treaty' (Kelly 2001b). Bush observed dramatically: 'The Pearl Harbor of the 21st century took place today' (Balz & Woodward 2002: A0 l). Foreshadowing a broad, global response to terrorism, Bush pointedly advised that his administration 'will make no distinction between the terrorists who committed these acts and those who harbor them' (Bush 2001a). At a press conference the following day, the President's language was even less restrained: 'The deliberate and deadly attacks which were carried out yesterday against our country were more than acts of terror. They were acts of war' (CINet 2001). America's closest allies quickly adopted similar language—although they were not aware of the scope of the military response being planned by the so-called neoconservatives who dominated the Bush cabinet and administration. Howard spoke of the 'terrible moment' and 'its implications for nations' other than the USA. No society was immune from the possibility of a terrorist attack, Howard warned: 'regrettably we now face the possibility of a period in which the threat of terrorism will be with us in the way that the threat of a nuclear war was around [sic] for so long before the end of the Cold War' (Mottram 2001).

Despite strong bipartisan support within the Australian Parliament for explicitly invoking ANZUS, the Howard Government carefully argued the wider legal basis for joining the USA. Alexander Downer, Minister for Foreign Affairs, promptly cited Article 51 of the UN Charter, which reads in part: 'Nothing in the present charter shall impair the inherent right of individual or collective self-defence if an armed attack occurs against a member of the UN.' And the government also cited a UN Security Council Resolution of 13 September that condemned the terrorist attacks and held accountable for the acts of terror 'those responsible for aiding, supporting or harboring the perpetrators' (Kelly 2001b).

The form and impact of terrorism signalled by the 11 September attacks expressed radical shifts in global politics and conflicts. At the beginning of the twenty-first century, international politics were shaped overwhelmingly by three broadly related developments: 'globalisation', American hegemony, and an unexpected upsurge in extra-state violence or terrorism. The dynamics of the Australian-American relationship after 2001 were embedded in these fundamental shifts in global politics. In this newly complex international environment, conventional state power did not guarantee security at home or supremacy abroad. Despite the unprecedented power of the USA and strength of many other Western states, new technology gave radical ideological groups, as well as so-called rogue states, unprecedented and largely unanticipated capacities to wage terror campaigns across national borders.
In the decade after the Cold War it became routine for analysts to write of an imperial and hegemonic USA asserting unprecedented global influence (Ignatieff 2003). Announcing the 'new era' in US national security strategy in December 2002, the State Department noted routinely: 'Today, the United States enjoys a position of unparalleled military strength and great economic and political influence' (and, in language consistent with official claims regarding the American Century, it added: 'we do not use our strength to press for unilateral advantage') (White House 2002: iii). Yet the Bush doctrine articulated in response to the 11 September attacks put unilateralism at the very centre of American policy: it unambiguously asserted that 'the course of this nation does not depend on the decisions of others' (Bush 2003). The deeply asymmetrical and fluid global geopolitical environment of the early twenty-first century was characterised by new adversaries and combat strategies, against which traditional international alliances offered uncertain security guarantees. In this environment, pragmatic alliances of 'the willing' coalesced for specific and limited purposes. The US-led response to the attacks of 11 September 2001 was built on such alliances—even as Washington soon proclaimed its right to respond unilaterally and pre-emptively.

AT WAR IN AFGHANISTAN

In the immediate wake of 11 September, Powell and Rumsfeld warned other nations, including close allies, that they would be judged in Washington by their willingness to support an alliance against the perpetrators of the attacks. Yet Washington's initial military response to the 11 September attacks was essentially unilateralist, building on plans hastily conceived by the inner circle of the Bush administration. The response was drafted amid outpourings of shock, support, and sympathy around the world. Le Monde famously declared: 'Nous sommes tous Americains' [We are all Americans]. NATO states offered to join any collective action against the new enemy. Washington declined this offer, fearing that a multilateral military response might delay and unduly complicate operations. However, the Bush administration's distaste for alliance support was qualified: after considerable debate it accepted commitments of military forces from two enduring allies: the UK and Australia.

At the same time as it rejected broader involvement of NATO forces in operations planned for Afghanistan, the USA continued to seek commitments from NATO and other allies to assist with peacekeeping and long-term recovery of the region. Detailed plans for Afghanistan's postwar reconstruction were not developed and the possible role of allied nations not addressed. Rather, the National Security Council agreed on details for an attack on the Taliban and, against Powell's advice, the President authorised the Pentagon to develop plans for future operations against Iraq. The Tony Blair and
Howard governments were locked into US operations in Afghanistan. More importantly, as willing allies in the initial US-led assault on the Taliban, the two close allies were conspicuously implicated in subsequent US efforts to expand fundamentally counter-terrorist actions under the controversial Bush doctrine. A week after the 11 September attacks, Bush anticipated a broad war on terrorism, telling a specially convened joint session of Congress that nations harbouring terrorists would be held responsible for their actions and 'will be regarded ... as a hostile regime' (Bush 2001b).

The US-led 'Operation Enduring Freedom' against Taliban forces in Afghanistan commenced on 7 October 2001. Ten days later, Bush officially accepted an Australian commitment of 1550 military personnel to the operation; a contribution centred on the deployment of a Special Air Service (SAS) regiment of 150 personnel. Australia joined the UK and the USA in early assaults against the Taliban. In the immediate aftermath of 11 September, the Australian public had strongly supported a military role in Afghanistan, accepting it as a necessary and appropriate action for a genuine ally of the US. A total of twenty-six additional nations subsequently contributed forces, although most were deployed in recovery and peace-building operations. Australia's military contribution to the war in Afghanistan was essentially symbolic. Officially, between 850 and 1300 Australian Defence Force personnel were serving in operational areas in Afghanistan, Kyrgyzstan, and the Persian Gulf at any one time, from late 2001 (Hibberd 2002). It seems that no more than 150 members of its Special Forces Task Group served 'on the ground' at any one time. By 10 November 2001 US-led forces supported by the local Northern Alliance had driven the Taliban from power. In late 2002 Australia withdrew its SAS forces from Afghanistan, leaving one mine-clearing expert as its total acknowledged public contribution to the fragile society's security (Grattan 2005a; Australian 2005e). Given Howard's public attempt to use the deployment as evidence of loyalty to the bilateral alliance, many observers were surprised when the Australian forces were withdrawn. Equally surprising was Australia's limited presence in the protracted multinational peacekeeping efforts in post-Taliban Afghanistan. Criticism of Australia's withdrawal intensified amid mounting evidence from international agencies, the UN and the World Bank of deepening hardship and continuing violence, and recognition by occupying forces that remnants of al-Qaeda remained, warlordism had resurfaced, and security had not been established beyond the locality of Kabul (Skelton 2003).

Four years later, the promise of counter-terrorist success in Afghanistan remained frustratingly unfulfilled as the USA and its allies waged a protracted war in Iraq while deploying fewer than 20 000 troops and international security forces in Afghanistan. The initial 'immense fund of goodwill' for US retaliation against al-Qaeda and the Taliban in Afghanistan quickly dissipated as the justifiable initial retaliation was deflected by the reaction to the controversial invasion of Iraq. On 11 September 2003 the
Sydney Morning Herald expressed widely held dismay with the failures of the American alliance in Afghanistan: 'When the Taliban was defeated, America's friends shared its hope of a new beginning for the people of Afghanistan' - a hope not yet realised. And, in words that echoed declining public support for the Bush doctrine's widening definition of rogue states, it concluded, 'America's definition of the war on terrorism and diversion into broader conflicts has strengthened neither its own nor global security' (Sydney Morning Herald 2003c).

A chorus of international opinion also called on the Bush administration to refocus on Afghanistan's reconstruction and to wage war more successfully on terrorist groups in the country's south and east along the border with Pakistan. Critics of Australia's limited role in Afghanistan's reconstruction voiced parallel arguments. They maintained that Australia's shallow military effort sent a cynical political message to its alliance partners, and implied that the Howard Government's deeds did not match its words. Conservative commentators expressed unease that during 2002 and 2005, in Afghanistan and Iraq, Australia's military contributions had been more symbolic than substantive. Michael Duffy, for example, claimed: 'Australia's contribution to the war against terrorism so far has been so modest it's dishonourable ... We left most of the hard work-and the dying-to American and British soldiers' (Duffy 2005b). Duffy drew attention to the curious workings of the bilateral relationship with Washington: 'America's acceptance of the gap between Australian rhetoric and participation is interesting', he wrote in March 2005. 'It's as if there was a deal, whereby President George Bush had accepted token military effort as long as it was preceded by prompt and unstinted diplomatic support' (Duffy 2005a). Another conservative commentator bemoaned 'the ADF's evident lack of capacity to project even limited force on the ground . . .' (Henderson 2002).

Howard was well aware of this criticism and of Pentagon disquiet with Australia's limited efforts and its desire for 'further Australian contributions' (Howard 2005i). Australia defended its minor role on the grounds that key elements of the Australian Defence Force (ADF) were deployed in establishing regional security on low-level operations in East Timor and the Solomons, and that SAS forces (and unspecified covert operations groups) in the Middle East were elite groups playing an extraordinary operational role in the coalition. Unwilling to commit substantial forces to security or reconstruction in Afghanistan, Australia was unable to influence the USA or coalition policy in the difficult country that remained the centre of the war on terrorism, even after reconstruction authority was transferred to NATO in August 2003. In contrast to Australia, many states unwilling to join the USA in Iraq participated in Afghanistan under the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF), which comprised service personnel from thirty countries, including fifteen members of the NATO alliance. For the first time in its fifty-four-year history, the NATO alliance acted beyond Europe's borders.
Four years after the first assault against the Taliban its influence was again spreading, especially in the southern and eastern provinces. And the wider war on terrorism, like the occupation of Iraq, made little progress. Belatedly, in July 2005, Howard announced that "a team of 150 SAS troops and supporting officers will be "on the ground" in Afghanistan within two months'-for a twelve-month deployment at an estimated cost between A$50 million and A$100 million. The forces operated under the control of US officers, with "a separate Australian national command" (Banham & Pearling 2005), as required under Australian military law. The SAS would return home in 2007 to provide security for the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) meeting in Australia. Howard conceded that the decision followed a request 'at a military level' by the USA 'and others [allies] amidst a resurgence of violence and renewed efforts by the Taliban to undermine the country's new government' (Banham & Pearling 2005). Critics said the 2005 commitment was 'better than nothing, but not much better' (William Maley quoted in Banham & Pearling 2005). Howard also announced he would 'explore options' for sending a 200-member provincial reconstruction team in April-June 2006. In contrast, New Zealand, Canada, and Italy had committed provincial response teams that contributed effectively to the reconstruction effort. By late 2005, Canberra had not yet established a diplomatic mission in Kabul.

Hugh White interpreted the limited troop numbers as marking 'the final demise [sic] of Howard's original concept for fighting the war on terrorism'. This strategy was built around short-term deployment of elite forces rather than long-term commitment of troops appropriate for a sustained occupation, peacekeeping or nation-building. White perceptively summarised the Howard Government's dilemma as it fought alongside American and British forces in Afghanistan and later Iraq. Once committed to action in these difficult theatres, 'there could be no quick victories, no limited commitments, no swift or easy exits', White observed. The Howard Government eventually agreed to American requests 'to put the troops back in the front line of an escalating conflict', which, as White (2005b) pointed out, was not like Iraq 'where Australian forces [could be used in] relatively peaceful tasks'.

The alliance against the Taliban brought unexpected irritants into the Australian-American relationship. Two Australian citizens, David Hicks and Mamdouh Habib, were detained by US special forces and interned with more than 600 other detainees in an isolated US naval base in Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, where they were denied the usual protections and judicial processes of the US legal system. Throughout Hicks's ordeal, newspaper opinion in Australia strongly supported his right to a fair trial and questioned the failure of the Howard Government (in contrast to the Blair Government) to leverage its alliance with the USA to protect the fundamental human rights of an Australian citizen. 'There may be little
public sympathy for Hicks', the *Sydney Morning Herald* editorialised. 'The toughest test of a democracy, however, is its willingness to uphold the rights of its least popular citizens. Hicks should be properly tried or brought home' (*Sydney Morning Herald* 2005c). This issue is further discussed in chapter 12 by Ann Kent.

Collaboration on the ground in Afghanistan marked the beginning of an increasingly intimate and complex relationship between Australia and the USA-a relationship made far more complex when generalised to Iraq. As terrorist acts proliferated, and American allies as diverse as Saudi Arabia, Spain, and Indonesia became targets, along with Britons, Australians, and Americans abroad, the character and implications of the bilateral alliance changed. Intelligence sharing, personnel exchanges, and covert security operations increasingly defined the relationship. As one enthusiastic supporter of ANZUS noted, the alliance was based upon a level of intelligence collaboration that is hidden from Australian citizens' (Scanlan 2003). Agents and agencies in both Washington and Canberra worked unacknowledged, covertly, with unexpected partners-including Pakistan, Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Indonesia, China, the Philippines, and Russia-against a common enemy that was ill defined, elusive and essentially stateless. Despite massive international expenditure and effort, those nations engaged in the so-called war on terrorism could not anticipate a decisive victory. Three years after 11 September, Bush conceded that 'I don't think we can win it' (quoted in Stewart 2004) (before adding that he meant there would be no formal peace settlement between the combatants).


PART 2: RELATIONSHIPS

TOWARDS IRAQ: ALLIES UNDER THE BUSH DOCTRINE

The attacks of 11 September did not initiate a new kind of international violence. As Peter Rodgers (2003) and others have correctly pointed out: 'the methodology and scale of Islamic anti-American violence changed, but the shift was incremental, not fundamental'. In 2000 the State Department's annual report on global terrorism identified more than 400 incidents over the previous decade, slightly less than half of which were directed at US citizens or facilities. Rather than attribute terrorism to a clash of ideologies, President Clinton and his Secretary of State, Madeleine Albright, identified globalisation as the root cause of a new kind of internationalised violence (Albright 1998). By 1999, in a statement that anticipated the Bush administration's controversial response to 11 September, Counter-Terrorism Coordinator Richard Clarke (quoted in Diamond 1999) declared a basic tenet of US counter-terrorism strategy. 'We may not just go in and strike against a terrorist facility,' he said. 'We may choose to retaliate against the facilities of the host country, if that host country is a knowing, cooperative sanctuary.' In the immediate aftermath of 11 September, this policy was resuscitated and extended.

In his 2002 State of the Union Address, Bush identified the new enemy of the West as an 'axis of evil' comprising Iraq, Iran, and North Korea. No longer could US policy be defined as a retaliatory response to specific terrorist threats linked directly to al-Qaeda. Now, 'rogue states'-those that harboured terrorists or were developing weapons of mass destruction (WMD)-were joined in administration rhetoric as imminent threats to global order and the security of the USA. Washington's 'new thinking' on international relations now explicitly incorporated unapologetic unilateralism, 'pre-emptive strikes', and military intervention abroad. It would be misleading to overstate the revolutionary nature of the new Bush foreign policy doctrine, just as it would be misleading to exaggerate the long-term consequences of 11 September on global affairs. Key elements of the doctrine were evident in US policies before 11 September.

This 'new' direction was most bluntly expressed by the influential columnist and advisor Charles Krauthammer before the Twin Towers shock: 'The new unilateralism seeks to strengthen American power and unashamedly deploy it on behalf of self-defined global ends.' In the late 1990s the very neoconservatives who became so influential in the Bush administration identified the removal of Saddam Hussein as vital to US interests (Krauthammer 2001). The Bush doctrine is widely interpreted as expressing the long-frustrated ideas of the so-called neoconservatives in Bush's administration and those linked to the 'Project for the New American Century', notably Paul Wolfowitz, Donald Rumsfeld, Richard Perle, William Kristol, and Lawrence F. Kaplan. However, its origins can also be traced to the greatly expanded non-combative role of the American military and Department of Defense from the end of the Cold War and the decline of the State Department as the principal source of international policy.
As its forces won initial successes against the Taliban, the Bush administration prepared for a broader assault on so-called rogue states that, it argued, sanctioned and supported terrorism. Increasingly, throughout 2002 it argued that new weapons technology and radical terrorist groups presented the 'civilised world with the gravest danger' (Bush 2003). The 2002 US 'National Security Strategy' was underpinned by the belief that 'in an age where the enemies of civilization openly and actively seek the world's most destructive technologies, the United States cannot remain idle while dangers gather' (White House 2002: 15). Bush spoke even more directly: 'Terror cells and outlaw regimes building weapons of mass destruction are different faces of the same evil. Our security requires that we confront both' (Bush 2002c).

The Bush doctrine was further elaborated during 2002, as the administration refined plans to overthrow Saddam Hussein. Bush explicitly rejected the use of containment and deterrence against 'shadowy terrorist networks with no nation or citizens to defend' or against 'unbalanced dictators with weapons of mass destruction' (Bush 2002b). Most controversially, Bush offered a detailed defence of the right of the USA to take pre-emptive military action against such enemies (White House 2002).

Very few traditional allies of the USA accepted the rationale for pre-emption advanced by the President. Important NATO allies, most prominently France and Germany, as well as other major global powers, including Russia and China, were disturbed by the implications of American policy. The Howard Government did not share such concerns, although Australia had not been touched directly by acts of terrorism. From mid-2002 Howard, Downer, and Robert Hill separately defended a state's right to strike pre-emptively against a possible enemy. Hill (2002a) stated in June, for example: 'A key lesson of the events of September 11 is that when a threat is seen to be emerging … you don't wait for the attack before you respond.' In recognition of the vitality and importance of ANZUS, Howard was invited to address a joint meeting of Congress on 12 June 2002—a rare privilege for a foreign leader. 'America has no better friend anywhere in the world than Australia,' he stated (Howard 2002a). Downer repeated this claim a few weeks later before a different audience in Dallas, Texas, 'reaffirming Australia's commitment to the dynamic and diverse relationship with the United States' (quoted in White 2003).

These expressions of solidarity were made as the war against the Taliban and al-Qaeda shifted from open military operations centred on Afghanistan to less overt work by special forces and covert security and intelligence cooperation embracing, in particular, Pakistan. As early as January 2002 reports received from Afghanistan disturbingly confirmed earlier intelligence that affiliates of al-Qaeda operating in South-East Asia were planning to attack so-called 'Western' targets in Singapore. At the same time, Australia was explicitly listed as a target of al-Qaeda in the
first media message by Osama bin Laden released after the 11 September attacks: Australian intelligence was also aware of extremist Islamic terrorist groups in Indonesia, centred on Jemaah Islamiyah, and linked informally to broader jihadist recruitment networks. Given deep disquiet expressed in parts of Indonesia and Muslim South-East Asia over Australia's role in East Timor from 1998, and the Howard Government's uncritical embrace of the Bush doctrine, Australian anxieties about terrorism in the region were not without foundation. If the USA saw the war on terrorism in global terms, Australia was increasingly concerned with the more regional implications of terrorism. It recognised that Islamic radicalism, based especially in Indonesia and Mindanao in the Philippines, constituted a genuine if unpredictable threat to both Australian and broader Western interests in the Asia-Pacific region.

Throughout 2003 the USA attempted to link Saddam Hussein's regime with support for acts of terror, and implied frequently that the 11 September attacks had Iraq's knowledge and support. Increasingly, as the US military developed its plans to overthrow Saddam, and the Bush administration attempted to cultivate willing allies for this action, public rhetoric justifying an attack on Iraq shifted to its alleged development of WMD. Increasingly, public discourse justifying military intervention against Saddam's regime conflated Iraq, WMD, and terrorism. In Australia, at least, the language of the Bush doctrine became the explanation for pre-emptive war. In November 2002 Howard proclaimed: 'The ultimate nightmare must surely be the possibility of weapons of mass destruction falling into the hands of terrorist groups. That is a powerful additional reason why a country such as Iraq, which has previously been willing to maliciously use weapons of mass destruction, should have those weapons denied to it' (Howard 2002b).

Congress took a giant step towards the invasion of Iraq on 10-11 October 2002, authorising the use of force by the President, and accepting that action could, if necessary, be conducted unilaterally.

THE BALI BOMBING

As the Bush administration attempted to gain broad international support for acting against Iraq, a series of bombings in the Philippines and Indonesia (Bali) confirmed the global dimensions of the new terrorism. On 10 October 2002 a bomb in a bus station in Kidapawan City in the southern Philippines killed eight people and wounded many more. The following day, a joint US-Philippines military exercise-'Talon-Vision'-commenced in Luzon. On 12 October two massive bombs exploded in the Sari Nightclub in Kuta Beach, Bali, killing 202 people, mostly foreign tourists, including eighty-eight Australians, thirty-eight Indonesians, twenty-six Britons, and seven Americans. In all, citizens from twenty-one countries were killed in the blasts (BBC News 2003).
This was the largest single terrorist act against Western interests since 11 September. Bush immediately expressed his nation's sympathy to Howard and the Australian people, stating that the attack must increase international resolve to defeat terrorism. It is clear that the Bali attack strengthened the Australian Government's support for US action against Iraq. On the eve of the Iraq war Howard listed Iraq, Bali, and 11 September as evidence 'that we are living in a world where unexpected and devastating terrorist attacks on free and open societies can occur in ways that we never before imagined possible' (Howard 2003g).

The Bali bombing was initially attributed to Jemaah Islamiyah, a militant group that intelligence sources believed had links to al-Qaeda. This suspicion was later sustained, as a number of perpetrators were found guilty of the offence in Indonesian courts. However conclusive proof of the precise nature of the connections to al-Qaeda remained elusive (Jones 2005). Nonetheless, Osama bin Laden promptly asserted: 'We warned Australia before to join in [the war] in Afghanistan, and [against] its despicable effort to separate East Timor . . . It ignored the warning until it woke up to the sounds of explosions in Bali' (Sydney Morning Herald 2002). Bin Laden's claims were later used by the Howard Government to deflect criticism that its prominent role in the invasion of Iraq made Australia an important terrorist target. Conveniently, Australian Government spokespeople ignored Afghanistan and ANZUS, and argued that involvement in Iraq and close relations with the USA had not brought Australia to the attention of international terrorist networks. The Bali bombing greatly accelerated emerging agreement on the need to strengthen regional counter-terrorist cooperation and the desirability of improved cooperation with the USA.

Shortly after the Bali bombing Howard clumsily proclaimed his government's right to take pre-emptive action against terrorist bases in other countries. Linking Australia's intervention in Solomon Islands to the war on terrorism, Howard emphasised: 'Rogue and failed states become the base from which terrorists and transnational criminals organise their operations, train their recruits and manage their finances' (ABC 2002; Flitton 2003b). Downer echoed Howard's claim, albeit in more subtle language. 'Sovereignty in our view is not absolute', he told the National Press Club in a speech critical of the role of multilateral institutions (Weekend Australian 2003). In the face of Australian Labor Party (ALP) claims that regional pre-emption had become the 'new Howard doctrine', the Prime Minister suggested that international law had not kept pace with the 'new realities' of global tension (Grattan 2002; Kirk 2002). Not until 2005, as Australia attempted to lever its way into new regional associations independently of the USA, did the Howard Government qualify its alleged right to pre-emptive action in its region.

Howard's pre-emption declaration provoked criticism that, like the Bush doctrine, it was an attack on the principles of international law and the authority of the UN. Local commentators, as well as many in South-East Asia, interpreted
Howard's ill-chosen words as reflecting Australia's role as regional deputy sheriff to the USA. Official government responses from Malaysia, the Philippines, and Indonesia were more considered and disturbed, and included claims that such action by Australia could constitute an 'act of war' (Holloway 2002).

IRAQ: INVASION AND OCCUPATION

By mid-2002 the Bush administration was determined that Iraq was to be invaded, Saddam overthrown, and the nation occupied until a representative government could be established. Throughout 2002 and early 2003 Bush and others of his inner circle consistently claimed that any action on Iraq was contingent on Saddam's response to demands that his regime rid itself of WMD. However, a range of evidence later became available that demonstrated that the Bush administration had decided to go to war regardless of the presence or absence of WMD in Iraq. By August 2002 the US Department of Defense had already commenced 'spikes of activity' against Saddam's regime, and had developed two broad military options for invasion of Iraq (the second of which, 'Running Start', underpinned the invasion in March 2003).

If British and, it seems, Australian government leaders were indeed aware of US plans, they did not strongly caution their powerful ally against war. Indeed, in the months before war, both governments joined broad diplomatic efforts led by the USA in the UN and beyond to 'justify' war and portray Iraq as a threatening 'rogue state' that fitted the definition of such states under the Bush doctrine. Australian and British officials were conscious that while the use of force could in some circumstances be justified under international law, the desire for regime change was 'not a legal basis for military action' (UK Foreign Minister Jack Straw and Attorney-General Lord Goldsmith quoted in Daniszewski 2005). The UK and Australia clearly understood that any invasion should be based on one of three possible legal claims: humanitarian intervention, UN Security Council intervention, or self-defence. Eventually, however, both governments joined the assault on Iraq in support of the US alliance, aware that war was not justified by any established international legal conventions or sustained by accurate intelligence. Their decision to join the invasion, and the rationale for action offered by them, drew strong criticism domestically. Additionally, many traditional US allies—including key NATO members—condemned both the decision to invade and the rationale on which it was justified.

Increasingly, US references to the UN were seen as efforts to make war more acceptable internationally, not as a genuine strategy for avoiding war. Nonetheless, an elaborate series of UN weapons inspections took place under Hans Blix as prominent members of the Security Council—including Russia and France—insisted that war was not an appropriate, acceptable, or legal way for disarming Iraq. Ultimately, the secretly planned date for a US invasion of Iraq—January 2003—passed, and no convincing evidence that
Iraq harboured WMD was uncovered. Nor was any convincing evidence available to confirm links between Saddam's regime and the 11 September attacks or al-Qaeda.

Like the Blair Government's 'inner circle', key members of the Howard cabinet were doubtless aware from at least mid-2002 of Bush administration plans to overthrow Saddam, regardless of evidence confirming his weapons program. By September 2002 Howard had fallen publicly into line behind Washington: 'I would have thought that the proposition that Iraq possesses weapons of mass destruction is beyond argument,' he stated in words that echoed through government rhetoric in the following months as the USA searched desperately to justify its planned invasion of Iraq (CAPD 2002c).

Many analysts agree that the 1947-48 UK-USA intelligence agreement 'remains the most important international agreement to which Australia is a party' (Ball 2001: 235; Ball & Richelson 1985). Yet, as the USA canvassed allied endorsement of its plans for war against Iraq, the politics of the bilateral alliance-and not the veracity of intelligence underpinning it-dominated Australian policy. ANZUS includes no guarantee of US support in the event of conflict: like Australian governments in Korea, Vietnam, and the first Gulf War, Howard Government policy was nonetheless premised on a belief that Australia must openly support the USA to ensure a reciprocal commitment to defend Australia. Thus, in the lead-up to war in Iraq, the Howard Government agreed to make a specific military commitment in the event of conflict. Working with the UK, it initially encouraged the Bush administration to seek UN authorisation and the broadest possible multilateral support for any precipitous action. The Bali bombing strengthened Australia's commitment to the war on terrorism while highlighting the importance of covert regional intelligence cooperation. It also reignited claims that Australians were a target of terrorists because of their government's close identification with American interests and policies.

Despite exhaustive and inconclusive negotiations centred on the UN during late 2002 and early 2003, the determination of the USA to bring about regime change in Iraq did not waver. In early November the UN Security Council unanimously resolved (Resolution 1441) that Iraq acknowledge its weapons programs and disarm or face 'serious consequences'. France and Russia accepted this resolution on the understanding that Iraq's failure to comply would constitute a 'material breach' and provoke further UN consideration: failure to comply did not automatically authorise the use of force. International legal opinion overwhelmingly accepted this interpretation of Resolution 1441. Furthermore, UN weapons inspectors repeatedly failed to uncover evidence that Iraq possessed WMD (and, of course, no credible evidence had linked Iraq with international terrorism). Yet American policy was unmoved by such complications (Blix 2003b; Urquhart 2004).

As the USA moved towards an invasion Howard again visited the White House. In early February 2003 Australia moved cautiously towards
contributing to the 'coalition of the willing' in the event of war. At the same time, the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) issued a White Paper that stressed: 'Australia's links with the United States are fundamental for our security and prosperity and … the government will continue to place a major priority on strengthening [this] alliance' (DFAT 2003a: xvi, 11). On 26 February 2003 Bush stated unequivocally that Saddam's regime would be removed from power. As Washington and its two principal allies, the UK and Australia, planned the military assault they rejected the need for further consultation with-or authorisation by-the UN. Now Bush-and with somewhat less public enthusiasm, Blair and Howard-argued that Resolution 1441 authorised war (quoted in Bumiller 2003).

On 17 March 2003 (US time) Bush delivered a blunt forty-eight-hour ultimatum to Saddam Hussein. Shortly before delivering this statement the President telephoned Howard, formally requesting military support in the initial invasion. Before the ultimatum to Saddam had expired, Howard advised the Australian public that General Peter Cosgrove, Chief of the Australian Defence Force, was authorised 'To place the Australian forces already deployed in the Gulf region as part of any US-led coalition operation that may take place in the future, directed in accordance with existing authority under UN resolutions to disarm Iraq' (Sydney Morning Herald 2003b).

It was a measure of Australian-US intimacy and agreement that Australian SAS forces were the first coalition troops to engage in combat against Iraq forces and that this engagement took place many hours before Bush's ultimatum was publicly scheduled to expire. On 17 March Howard publicly pledged Australian military support in 'Operation Iraqi Freedom'-a pledge made after SAS forces had entered Iraq. On 20 March Australia committed 2000 Defence Force personnel to the invasion, including a Special Forces Task Group, Navy frigates, and aircraft. The decision to act without UN sanction and with qualified international involvement precipitated strong public protests, including a series of anti-war rallies reminiscent of those staged throughout Australian cities during the Vietnam War a generation earlier (Kevin 2002; Eccleston 2004; Woodward 2004).²

Washington's traditional allies had little impact on the direction or conduct of US policy in the months before the invasion of Iraq. Nonetheless, key Bush administration officials worked closely with Canberra and London, sharing intelligence, explaining US policy, and seeking commitments of troops and peacekeeping forces in the event of war and, from July 2002, planning joint operations through military-to-military discussions. Joint preparations, premised on joint military involvement in Iraq, took place on many levels. Howard maintained publicly that cabinet had not committed Australian troops to any US-led operations in Iraq, and emphasised throughout late 2002 that war could still be avoided. However, the official Department of Defence booklet, *The War in Iraq: ADF Operations in the Middle East in 2003*, later conceded that close military collaboration implied
a joint commitment to war: 'Perhaps influenced by Australia's successful and professional contribution to Operation Slipper in Afghanistan, US staff consistently indicated they would welcome any Australian contribution including intelligence support, air and sea transport, warships, combat aircraft, air-to-air refuelling or special forces' (DOD 2004c: 8). When war came, Australian special forces stationed in the Middle East were well prepared for combat and were immediately deployed. This rapid initial contribution to the invasion made concrete the Howard Government's unswerving public support for the controversial Bush doctrine.

Four weeks after coalition forces crossed into Iraq the invasion was over. Baghdad had fallen, and Saddam's regime was destroyed. However, the occupation, reconstruction, and democratisation of Iraq were to prove far more difficult than the removal of Saddam's brutal regime. And, in the wake of the invasion, the claims on which it had been justified were exposed as being without foundation. The discredited Iraq regime did not possess WMD. Nor were any links with al-Qaeda demonstrated. Claims by the USA and its supporters that invasion constituted a just war to disarm Iraq and to establish a free society were exposed as hollow. Iraq descended into a prolonged period of bloody civil violence that occupying forces proved unable to contain. And, as violence escalated and commentators spoke of civil war in an increasingly factionalised Iraq, new rationales were offered by the Australian Government to justify its role alongside the USA. In particular Howard claimed that involvement in Iraq would 'make it less likely that a terrorist attack will be carried out against Australia' (Howard 2003a). At the same time his government introduced extreme security measures and legislation against this very possibility.

Howard's sensitivity to the possible domestic political implications of the war led him to announce that Australian forces would not contribute to long-term reconstruction or peacekeeping operations. Australia's role was designed to identify it prominently with the initial assault while minimising casualties and avoiding protracted involvement in postwar security arrangements or reconstruction programs. In announcing cabinet's decision to send troops to the front line of the 'coalition of the willing', Howard implicitly accepted that without UN approval such action lacked majority support at home. Thus he downplayed the possibility of mass civilian casualties, defined tight rules of engagement for Australia's forces, and emphasised that troops would operate under a separate command structure with 'targeting' rules more restrictive than those for US troops. Howard's careful announcement, most commentators agreed, was designed to allay 'fears' that Australian forces 'may be ordered by United States military commanders to undertake operations with high risk to [Iraqi] civilian lives' (Kitney 2003; Riley 2003). As leader of one of only three nations participating in the initial military invasion, Howard sought to balance support for the US alliance with domestic disquiet over the reasons for war against Iraq.
Many of Australia's troops were withdrawn soon after the fall of Baghdad. In the words of one Australian newspaper two years later, 'Australia has played a minor post-invasion role'. Some who had supported, albeit reluctantly, Australia's military role in the initial assault were nonetheless disturbed by its limited contribution to securing peace and helping with reconstruction. 'Australia's participation in the United States-led invasion of Iraq', the *Sydney Morning Herald* editorialised, 'carried a legal and moral obligation not to "cut and run"'. In domestic political terms, however, Howard's strategy had succeeded, it claimed. Australia retained a 'disproportionately small force' in occupied Iraq—a politically astute policy given domestic disquiet over the ethics and efficacy of the invasion and occupation (*Sydney Morning Herald* 2005b). This concern intensified during 2005 when it was revealed that the Australian Wheat Board funnelled bribes of A$290 million to Saddam's regime between 1999 and 2003 in contravention of the UN Oil-for-Food Program, as the Howard Government publicly embraced US plans to overthrow this very regime (*Sydney Morning Herald* 2006b).

In April 2003 Howard rejected US requests for a significant increase in Australia's deployment in Iraq. Throughout the bloody previous year of the occupation, Howard, Downer, and Defence Minister Hill consistently defended Australia's military role as more than a 'token force' designed to show solidarity with Washington (Wikipedia 2005). Howard's announcement of Australia's military commitment was unapologetic about its relationship to the alliance. 'The Americans have helped us in the past and the United States is very important to Australia's long-term security,' he said. 'It is critical that we maintain the involvement of the United States in our region' (Howard 2003a). As in the case of Afghanistan, Howard defended Australia's limited involvement in Iraq as evidence that Australia was prepared to assist with the initial 'heavy lifting' but was obliged in the longer term to deploy the bulk of its forces closer to home, to ensure security in its 'troubled immediate region'.

In October 2003 the UN Security Council, under Resolution 1511, authorised formation of a US-led multinational stabilisation force for Iraq. Resolution 1511 thus provided a degree of international respectability for security operations in Iraq. In December 2003 Howard declared ambiguously that Australians had 'largely moved on' from the war in Iraq' (Dodson 2004). Four months later, amid escalating violence, instability, and reports of a Shi'ite uprising (Rothwell 2004), Howard acknowledged that Australian troops would not be withdrawn 'until the job is done'. His pledge echoed Bush's reaffirmation that US forces would 'stay the course', if necessary beyond the planned 30 June 2004 handover of authority to a new interim Iraqi administration. As Bush requested more Australian troops, additional US forces were committed.
Australia's actual contribution to the occupation and reconstruction of Iraq was relatively insignificant. Two thousand Australian troops already in the Middle East were promptly committed to the initial assault. As early as May 2003, with the overthrow of Saddam effected, some Australian forces-250 air force personnel-were withdrawn. By mid-July of that year 1370 ADF personnel were stationed in Iraq, including the recently deployed Al-Muthanna Task Group near the southern border, and the Australian Government now accepted that it should play an identifiable role in Iraq's recovery. By July 2004, 1000 Australian personnel were stationed on Iraqi soil: 880 troops and a security detachment of 120. Hill (2004a) defended this deployment in words welcomed by the Bush administration: 'Our commitment obviously is to remain [in Iraq] . . . until the job is done.' By August-September 2005 the total number of acknowledged Australian military personnel 'in the region' had reached 1370 (DOD 2005c), boosted by the deployment of 450 troops to protect Japanese forces carrying out humanitarian work at Al-Muthanna (Alford 2005). Again, as commentators were quick to point out, this Australian deployment was 'less risky than the frontline role of US and British troops' (Sydney Morning Herald 2005b).

Despite the conspicuous role played by the UK, other prominent members of the British Commonwealth refused to participate in Iraq- including Canada and, initially, New Zealand (which later sent a non-combat force of about sixty personnel in 2004). In the twelve months to March 2004 the number of nations sending military or security-related personnel to Iraq rose from twenty-seven to thirty-four. The number of troops provided by each state ranged between 35 and 135 000 (Stanley 2005). Expressed
in relative terms, as a proportion of a nation's population, or overall troop numbers, the US contribution was far greater than that of any other state. Australia's contribution was relatively small, far exceeded by the UK, as well as by a variety of European states, including Italy, Poland, the Netherlands, Bulgaria, and Denmark.

AUSTRALIA, IRAQ, AND THE BILATERAL ALLIANCE

Throughout the engagement in Iraq, the Howard Government proclaimed that its strategy had confirmed and strengthened the American alliance. However, this sentiment was not always shared at top levels of the Bush administration. Referring to the gap between Howard's public rhetoric and military commitment, White commented: '… alongside the understandable gratitude for Howard's political support in the early days, many in Washington-and London-have been sourly conscious that Howard has put very little substance behind his strong rhetorical support for Bush's policy in Iraq since Saddam's statue fell in April 2003' (White 2005d).

As he authorised participation of Australian forces in Iraq, Howard stated publicly that he had received no advice suggesting that this military action would increase the threat posed to Australia by terrorism. He indicated he was 'very comfortable' with his decision to order Australian forces to join the invasion as it was based on the authority of seventeen UN security resolutions taken over many years relating to Iraq's failure to disarm (Sheridan 2005c; Riley 2003). However, the bombs that exploded near the Australian embassies in Jakarta and Baghdad during 2003 and 2004 made Howard's argument more difficult to sustain. The massive Madrid bombing indicated strongly that involvement in the 'coalition of the willing' brought increased risks of terrorist attack for prominent allies of the USA. Reflecting on the Madrid attack, Howard dutifully reiterated Washington's rhetoric, branding the newly elected Spanish Government's decision to withdraw its troops from Iraq as a 'concession to terrorism'. He repeated the claim that 'a very bold and courageous attempt is being made to establish democracy' in Iraq (quoted in Shanahan 2004). More broadly, however, the Australian Government justified joining the US-led actions in Iraq in familiar terms-as essential to preserving the American alliance (Camilleri 2003; Hancher 2004; McDonald 2005b). As evidence mounted in occupied Iraq of civilian deaths, human rights abuses (including torture and so-called 'rendition'), and ongoing 'insurgency' and terrorism, the Australian Government struggled to defend its role. Amid protracted factionalised and criminalised violence, public support for the occupation declined in Australia and in the USA.

Critics of Australia's involvement argued that the invasion was unprovoked, unnecessary, and unlawful. Iraq's supposed arsenal of weapons did not exist, and Australian intelligence had established this fact before the invasion began. Like the Bush and Blair governments, the Howard
Government's public interpretation of intelligence greatly exaggerated the threat allegedly posed by Saddam's regime and ignored compelling evidence that Iraq did not constitute a threat to international peace or was complicit in international terrorism. Howard relied heavily on US and UK interpretations of shared intelligence and, like these governments, largely ignored UN findings, such as the evidence reported by Hans Blix and the UN Monitoring, Verification and Inspection Commission. On 4 February 2003, for example, Howard asserted that there was 'compelling evidence ... within the published detailed dossiers of British and American intelligence' that 'Iraq's current military planning specifically envisages the use of chemical and biological weapons ... Iraq is reconstituting its nuclear weapons programme ... All key aspects-R&D, production, and weaponisation-of Iraq's offensive biological weapons programme are active and most elements are larger and more advanced than they were before the Gulf war' (Howard 2003g; see also UK Joint Intelligence Committee 2002; Central Intelligence Agency 2002; for a clear and carefully argued discussion of the full report and its implications see Garran 2004).

Ultimately, the Howard Government went to war despite the fact that it was aware that the decision was not convincingly supported by intelligence on Iraq (PJCAAD 2004; Manne 2005). Defending the decision, Downer conceded that refusal to join the war would have 'very substantially' weakened bilateral ties with the USA. 'It wasn't a time in our history to have a great and historic breach with the United States,' he observed pragmatically (Allard 2004a).

The government's public rationale for embracing US counter-terrorism constantly reiterated conventional claims about the value of ANZUS as a defence guarantee for its junior partner. Yet the government's oft-cited Defence White Paper, Defence 2000: Our Future Defence Force, had emphasised local self-reliance and conceded that US forces would not necessarily act to protect Australia from attack: 'a healthy alliance should not be a relationship of dependency but of mutual help' (DOD 2000: 36; Kelly 2001a; Ball 2001; McDonald 2001). Paradoxically, Australia's self-reliance and its capacity to act independently in so-called regional crisis management was predicated on its continuing access to advanced US information and weapons technology, as well as continuing privileged access to US-UK intelligence. Deepening integration with US weapons technology, security planning, and intelligence- rather than ambiguous reciprocal obligations under ANZUS-increasingly underpinned the bilateral relationship. Australian defence preparedness was linked deeply and routinely to technology and planning developed through the US Department of Defense. In effect, this reduced Australia's capacity to act independently along lines anticipated by the Defence White Paper, which was published before 11 September 2001. Recognition of the changing character of the bilateral alliance came in 2005 through a special presidential decree that gave Australia privileged access to new levels of US intelligence (Sheridan 2005a).
Given the failure of US intelligence before 11 September, failures in the war on terrorism in Afghanistan and South-East Asia, manipulation of intelligence to justify invasion of Iraq, and the bloody stalemate in occupied Iraq, enhanced bilateral intimacy might have been interpreted as, at best, ambiguous confirmation of the value of the ANZUS alliance to the junior partner. Nonetheless, some commentators shared the Howard cabinet's view that this 'unprecedented access to US intelligence and tactical planning' made the alliance a 'global partnership' (Sheridan 2005a). Cooperation against terrorism was but one factor underpinning deeper bilateral cooperation; important also was cooperation anticipated before 11 September 2001, which centred on the controversial US missile defence program, efforts to restrict proliferation of nuclear weapons to unpredictable regimes, shared refusal to support the Kyoto protocols, and participation in a range of initiatives as diverse as the US Joint Strike Fighter project, on-the-ground combat cooperation in the Middle East, and the bilateral free trade agreement (FTA). Deeply embedded in intelligence sharing and committed to sheltering under the umbrella of the bilateral alliance, Australia was implicated routinely in American policy and action. Australia's prominent military role in the invasion and occupation of Iraq fell outside the conventions of international law, especially as interpreted and invoked by the UN Australia's willingness to promote the right of a state to engage unilaterally, or collectively, in pre-emptive military action against another state pointedly contravened these conventions. Australia's public acceptance of US-defined rules of engagement, as well as the practices of imprisonment, interrogation, torture, and 'third' country secret interrogation ('rendition'), many argued, also placed Australian behavior outside agreed norms of international law and human rights protection.

Most Australians accepted that their nation's involvement in Iraq made Australia a more likely terrorist target (despite the fact that the invasion came shortly after the Bali bombing) (Gregory & Wilkinson 2005). Critics of the alliance argued pragmatically that it more deeply implicated Australia in US policies and actions that ultimately undermined Australia's security and, in the words of the former Liberal Prime Minister, Malcolm Fraser, made 'America's enemies ... Australia's enemies' (Fraser 2003). In September 2004 a major explosion at the gates of the Australian Embassy in Jakarta delivered, in the words of Howard, 'a chilling reminder that the terrorist threat to Australians remains very real' (Australian 2005a). Two years after the Bali attack, Australia publicly acknowledged that counter-terrorism arrangements in South-East Asia must be further strengthened. Most observers accepted that as a central ally of the USA, an unqualified public supporter of the invasion of Iraq, and a Western society with deep links to South-East Asia, Australia remained a prominent potential target of terrorism. By early 2005 Howard accepted that Australians had 'fallen victim to terrorist attacks' in the USA, Saudi Arabia, Iraq, and Indonesia, but the nation had 'avoided a terrorist attack on our soil' (Walters et al. 2004; Australian 2005a).

Between 2003 and 2005 the occupation of Iraq was understood by many Australians as unnecessary and flawed, attracting to and encouraging terrorism in Iraq and exacerbating anti-Americanism throughout the region and among Islamic communities more broadly. As opposition to the war in Iraq grew internationally and anti-war sentiment escalated within the USA, the Lowy Institute for International Policy’s *Australians Speak 2005* poll indicated that ‘Australians are as divided now about our military contribution to Iraq as they were about the war itself, and have remained largely consistent in their views over the past two years’ (Cook 2005b: 4). Australian opinion was evenly divided over Australia’s continued involvement: ‘Of those who said they supported the Iraq War at the time, 78 per cent support our continued military involvement. Of those who opposed going to war at the time, 76 per cent are against our continued military involvement’ (Cook 2005b: 4; for a discussion of changing opinion in the USA, see Coultan 2004). Opinion polls conducted in September 2004 suggested that a majority of Australians were opposed to unilateral US action against Iraq, but would strongly endorse multilateral action under the auspices of the UN. Polling also indicated that opposition 'to involvement in' Iraq was much stronger than opposition to maintaining the bilateral alliance (McDonald 2005b). Both major political parties gave the alliance strong and continuing support, although periodically the ALP argued for greater independence in Australian policy and expressed disquiet over Howard’s refusal to plan an exit strategy or timetable for troop withdrawal from Iraq.
Lowy Institute polling in 2005 also highlighted widespread pragmatism as well as inconsistency in Australian opinion. Almost 75 per cent of those polled viewed ANZUS as very important or fairly important for Australia's security. However, only one in five said that Australia should follow the USA should war erupt with China over Taiwan. Two-thirds of the survey group believed Australian foreign policy should be decided more independently of the USA. And, although between 83 per cent and 95 per cent of respondents felt 'positive' about New Zealand, the UK, Europe, Singapore, and Japan, only 52 per cent felt 'positive' about the USA—a level shared with Indonesia. Reflecting, perhaps, short-term disquiet over the Bush doctrine and longer-term fears of so-called Americanisation, 56 per cent of those polled ranked 'United States foreign policies' and 'Islamic fundamentalism' equally as 'potential threats' to Australia (Cook 2005b: 1, 2005c)—a result one commentator labelled 'a startling equivalence' (Parkinson 2005a).

A BILATERAL FREE TRADE AGREEMENT

Bilateral relations centred on counter-terrorism were paralleled in the international economic arena as the alliance partners conducted protracted negotiations to secure a bilateral FTA. Preliminary bilateral discussions of an FTA began under the Clinton administration. They were accelerated by the new Bush administration, guided by the zealous Robert Zoelick. Under Bush, bilateral free trade arrangements became instruments of alliance politics. Official rhetoric during negotiations emphasised mutual benefit to old friends and strong allies. Obstacles at the centre of the negotiations grew out of Australia's reluctance to compromise protection of secondary industry and cultural production and fears that more open borders would accelerate Americanisation and erode national identity. Sectional interests in the USA that had long been beneficiaries of massive farm subsidies feared open competition from agricultural imports, especially on sugar. Objections raised both in Australia and in the USA had deep historic and economic roots as, for decades, trade and investment issues had strained bilateral relations.

Approved by the US Congress and Australian Parliament in August 2004, the FTA came into effect on New Year's Day 2005. Mark Vaile, the Australian Minister for Trade, welcomed the agreement as 'the commercial equivalent of the ANZUS Treaty' (Banham & Garnaut 2005). Downer suggested that US acceptance for the agreement was encouraged by Australia's unwavering support for the ANZUS alliance (CAPD 2004f). Although some mainstream commentary was convinced that Australia had 'extracted' the agreement from the USA 'in return' for 'dutiful soldiering' in Iraq, there is no conclusive evidence to suggest that the FTA was a generous concession to a loyal ally. And, as John Ravenhill notes in chapter 10, the agreement did not immediately or completely eliminate barriers to trade or significantly rebalance the trading relationship (Banham & Garnaut 2005; Weiss, Thurbon & Mathews 2004).
RECONCILING ALLIANCE POLITICS AND REGIONAL ENGAGEMENT

Immediately the Liberal and National Parties Coalition won government, Howard argued that it would rebalance Australia's external relationships: it would give greater attention to North America and Western Europe without undermining relationships with its Asian neighbours. Yet Canberra accepted, in the words of Deputy Prime Minister Tim Fischer, that 'Australia's most important strategic and economic interests lie in the Asia-Pacific' (Henderson 2000). Despite economic integration, Australia's regional ambitions were constrained as it was refused membership of Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN)+3 (APT; ten ASEAN states plus Japan, South Korea, and China), and excluded from ASEM (Asia-Europe Meeting, the biannual discussions between ASEAN+3 nations and those from the European Union). At the same time, despite Australia's initial hopes, APEC failed to emerge as a pivotal regional forum. It was widely argued that Australia's uncritical embrace of the American alliance worked against its unqualified acceptance in the Asia-Pacific community and against its membership of regional forums.

Australia's role in the war on terrorism had unexpected consequences for its complex regional relationships and broader regional engagement. Between 2002 and 2005 the number of terrorist incidents increased as did the range of societies targeted. Bombings linked specifically to al-Qaeda and Jemaah Islamiyah, or broadly attributed to Islamic fundamentalists, violently disrupted a range of societies, including Indonesia (Bali, 12 October 2002, and Jakarta, 9 September 2004), Spain (Madrid, 11 March 2004), Pakistan (Quetta, 19 March 2005), UK (London, 7 July 2005), Turkey (Cesm, 10 July, and Kusadasi, 16 July 2005), and Egypt (Sharm el-Sheik, 23 July 2005). In the altered strategic environment signalled by these attacks, international cooperation increased. While the war in Iraq fractured an informal coalition of states centred on Afghanistan, it did not end their shared resolve to confront terrorism separately and collectively. In this changed, more fluid global environment, Australia's capacity to balance the American alliance with regional integration was strengthened.

Increasingly 'terrorism' became a central concern of governments in Europe, the Middle East, and much of Asia. Hence an increasing number of states collaborated, if often covertly, in a broadening informal alliance against domestic and international terrorism. Many governments introduced anti-terrorist security laws that echoed the US Patriot Act. This common focus of a broad range of governments brought Australia into complex, covert international security regimes built around shared intelligence and shared security concerns. Australia's relationships with nations as diverse as the UK, Pakistan, and Indonesia, as well as the USA, were reshaped in central ways by cooperation against a common enemy-albeit one that was ill-defined and elusive. Rather than submerge Australia within a complex of multilateral...
arrangements, these developments increased its international visibility and deepened its working relationship with the USA. Australia's cooperation with the government of Indonesia and ties to the UK and British Commonwealth states elevated Australia's importance to the USA as did growing political rapprochement and economic ties with ASEAN and China.

In October 2003 the US and Chinese presidents were honoured by the Howard Government in ways that signalled Australia's efforts to balance old alliances with new global realities. Bush and Hu Jintao, separately, addressed the Australian Parliament-an honour never extended to a British or Japanese leader. The significance of the equal courtesies granted each was not lost on the local press, with Paul Kelly suggesting it 'will be seen as a symbolic turning point in our history' (Kelly 2005c).

Between 2001 and 2005 it was routinely claimed that the bilateral relationship confronted deep challenges as—in the words of Rowan Callick (2005)—the junior partner made 'new best friends in Asia ... The rise of China will test Australia's strong alliance with the United States'. It was widely asserted that the Howard Government's conciliatory policies towards Beijing on such sensitive issues as human rights, the future of Taiwan, and North Korea were dictated by economic interests and uncomfortably out of step with US policy. This view was strengthened as Australia's deepening economic ties to China had, by 2005, led to preliminary discussion of an FTA.

The conduct and public rationale for Australia's China policies diverged significantly from those of the Bush administration, particularly from 2004. While Bush's rhetoric on China was publicly constrained, administration
officials including Condoleezza Rice and Rumsfeld warned of the dangers of a Chinese military build-up, stressed that the USA remained committed to Taiwan's separate national status, and cautioned Beijing over its associations with North Korea. At the same time, the USA struggled to rein in a massive trade deficit with China. US policies were built on efforts to manage China's influence as it rapidly emerged as a global economic giant and the dominant power in Asia. The Bush administration no longer spoke of China as a 'strategic competitor'. Yet in broad terms the USA sought to contain China. Australian policies favoured cooperative engagement. In 2004 Downer provoked disquiet in Washington when he stated on a visit to Beijing that the terms of the ANZUS treaty did not obligate Australia to aid the USA in the event of a conflict centred on Taiwan. While some US experts continued to warn that 'the greatest threat to alliance is the absence of a common approach to Beijing' (Blumenthal 2005b), the Howard Government agreed that China be permitted to purchase Australian uranium and accepted Beijing's assurances that uranium use would be restricted to peaceful purposes.

Canberra accepted that China's rise would be peaceful, not expansionist, and that China's economic power would not translate into irresponsible or precipitous international behaviour. The Bush administration was far more circumspect. As Randy Schriver, Assistant Secretary of State for East Asian Affairs, observed in May 2005 'We are trying to both shape China's direction and hedge against bad outcomes' (Sales 2005: 14).

Washington's desire to influence the Australia-China relationship led in 2005 to the upgrading, to ministerial level, of the United States-Australia-Japan Trilateral Security Dialogue. Yet Canberra's close 'relationship' with Beijing also provided Washington with important, if indirect, policy advantages. As an intimate bilateral ally, Washington welcomed Australia's entry into the East Asia Summit. Similarly, as discussions of a free trade agreement between Australia and China expanded, they became for Washington a window into China's wider trade policy and willingness to commit to genuine economic reform.

By late 2005 the US-Australian alliance was increasingly interpreted as a vehicle for cooperative diplomacy in Asia rather than a wedge between the Western alliance partners and their Asian regional neighbours, especially China. The hawkish Richard Armitage (2003), former US Deputy Secretary of State, claimed as early as August that both nations wanted 'to see a world where Australia is an Asian power, closely integrated in regional partnerships'. His statement implicitly conceded the limits of unilateralism and Washington's revived acceptance of the value of multilateralism and institution-building in the face of a changing configuration of global power centred on China. It also acknowledges Australia's success in developing deeper partnerships throughout Asia, despite its undiluted commitment to the American alliance.

Canberra's regional links were gradually accepted in Washington as complementing US interests in the Asia-Pacific. Referring to America's 'complicated relationship with China', as it translated its expanding economic
PART 2: RELATIONSHIPS

power to increased military power, Bush told Howard in July 2005 that their two
governments should work more closely on China: 'I know that Australia can lend [sic] a
wise message to the Chinese about the need for China to take an active role in the
neighbourhood to prevent, for example, Kim Jong-ii from developing nuclear weapons'
(Metherell 2005b). Howard's carefully worded indirect response addressed wider alliance
issues: the misapprehension that Australia could not simultaneously manage relationships
with the two great powers in the Asia-Pacific-the USA and China-without inevitable
'conflict' and damage to ANZUS. At a time of intense anti-China sentiment in the USA,
Howard also downplayed the negative regional implications of China's rising influence.
'China is a country that is growing in power and economic strength but understands that
military conflict of any kind is not conducive to her medium or long-term goals' (Davis
2005). Howard described his government's ability to balance relations with Asian
neighbours and China while working more closely with its American ally than at any time
since the Second World War as a 'pivotal' point in Australian history (Shanahan 2005).

In mid-2005 Australia's regional diplomatic efforts were rewarded: it was invited
to join the first East Asia Summit, held in Malaysia in December 2005, a grouping that
included the ASEAN+3 members. Australia was accepted as an East Asian partner in an
association that excluded the USA. Australia was now accepted within ASEAN and
enmeshed increasingly into an economic and political community influenced by China. At
the same time Australia was, with the UK, a forthright ally of the USA, locked into
America's Asia-Pacific alliance strategy, along with Japan, the Philippines, South Korea,
and, in more ambivalent ways, India-an alliance system designed to manage China's rising
power.

Australia's entry into important regional organisations coincided with negotiations
of a US-ASEAN Enhanced Partnership and US efforts to revitalise the ASEAN
Cooperation Plan established in August 2002 and to strengthen the work of the 2003
'United States-ASEAN Counter-Terrorism Work Plan'. As the USA searched for closer
cooperation on counter-terrorism, terrorist investigation, and prosecution, it sanctioned
Australia's collaboration regionally on counter-terrorism, security cooperation, and
intelligence sharing. Indeed, even as Australian policies in Asia reflected greater
diplomatic independence and economic self-interest, they indirectly reinforced US efforts
to strengthen ties with the ASEAN states and better manage relations with China.

For both Australia and the USA, the inconclusive war on terrorism gradually re-
emphasised the importance of alliance building and patient diplomacy. Australia's
expanding regional linkages, and its belated disavowal of its right to strike pre-emptively
against targets in the Asia-Pacific, emphasised its determination to be identified as a
regional power positioned to secure its political and economic interests in the rapidly
growing region.
Despite the ANZUS alliance, under Howard, Australia had confirmed that it was a nation capable of expressing and pursuing its particular interests, regionally if not globally. In the changed international climate after 11 September, Australia had, it seemed, successfully turned towards the USA (and the UK) without turning its back on Asia (Sheridan 2005c). For reasons that could not have been anticipated when Howard first won office in the mid-1990s, links to the USA and the UK were revitalised in the common cause against 'global terrorism' while economic and political engagement deepened with many states of East and South-East Asia.

In the unanticipated geopolitical environment after 11 September 2001, Australia was not obliged to choose between its 'history' and its 'geography'- in large part because the new terrorism cut across old divides, bringing unexpected military cooperation, intelligence sharing, and institution-building between states with shared interests in defeating terrorism both at home and abroad. Australia's reinvigorated relationship with the UK and close cooperation with Indonesia grew largely from broadly shared concerns over terrorism and recognition that successful global counter-terrorism hinged ultimately on US resolve. The assault on the Taliban and al-Qaeda and war in Afghanistan, although painfully inconclusive, fostered concerted international cooperation against an agreed enemy. In the unexpected global climate signalled by the war on terrorism, Australia surprisingly found greater room to manoeuvre, both regionally and internationally, while strengthening bilateral ties to the USA. Shared efforts in counter-terrorism boosted Australia's capacity to act as a regional interlocutor for the USA, in multilateral dialogue and institution-building as well as with particular ASEAN states, central to the war on terrorism. In this altered international environment, collaborative relationships and political alliances were redrawn in unexpected ways. Australia's bilateral association with Washington became more important to both states. Australia's importance to the USA in the Asian region grew appreciably. And the UK joined the two ANZUS allies in a triangular partnership against the new global forms of terrorism that Rice described as 'unexpected challenges' provoked by an 'ideology of hatred in foreign societies' that have not adopted 'liberty' and 'democracy' (US Department of State 2005).

From 2002 Australia became deeply implicated in US policy and actions as it broadened its so-called war on terrorism. As arguably the USA's most loyal ally, Australia echoed the public rationale for the Bush doctrine and assumed some responsibility for the character and consequences of US-led counter-terrorism.6 In particular, by accepting that the war on terrorism should centre on regime change in Iraq, Australia shared responsibility for the invasion, prolonged occupation, and unresolved conflicts in Iraq. Involvement in Iraq fractured allied solidarity evident against the Taliban and al-Qaeda in Afghanistan; compromised wider counter-terrorist initiatives; greatly elevated the risks of 'blowback', including further terrorist attacks against Western
interests; weakened the stature of the UN; and compromised the conduct of foreign policy under agreed norms of international law. Additionally, the efforts of the Bush and Howard administrations to justify the Iraq adventure weakened the international integrity of their two governments and damaged the reputation of the very intelligence on which alliance policy was built and justified. Further military actions in the war on terrorism, beyond Afghanistan at least, became more difficult to justify to a sceptical public in both states. By nominating Iraq as central to its war on terrorism, the USA and its obedient Australian ally disrupted the broad international consensus that emerged in the aftermath of 11 September and exacerbated the very acts of international violence they ostensibly sought to eradicate.

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NOTES

1. Howard stated that Australia could take pre-emptive military action against terrorist cells operating in neighbouring countries: 'It stands to reason that if you believed that somebody was going to launch an attack against your country, either of a conventional kind or of a terrorist kind, and you had a capacity to stop it and there was no alternative other than to use that capacity, then of course you would have to use it' (ABC 2002).

2. Bob Woodward's well-received book on the US invasion of Iraq, Plan of Attack, states that Australian forces engaged Iraqi troops eight hours before the ultimatum ended (Woodward 2004).

3. The twelve major contributors to military or security personnel in Iraq were: the USA 130 000; UK 9000; Italy 3000; Poland 2460; Ukraine 1600; Spain 1300; Netherlands 1100; Australia 800; Romania 700; Bulgaria 480; Thailand 440; and Denmark 420.

4. This claim gained wide currency as the occupation of Iraq continued. In July 2005 the respected Chatham House reported that there is 'no doubt' involvement alongside the USA in Iraq had placed the UK-Washington's closest ally-at 'particular risk'. The alliance with the USA 'imposed particular difficulties for Britain and the wider coalition against terrorism', boosting the appeal of al-Qaeda, expanding recruitment, and strengthening its financial base. Additionally, the report argued, the war in Iraq had deflected counter-terrorist resources from use in Afghanistan and unwittingly provided an ideal training ground for al-Qaeda recruits (Button 2005).

5. For a balanced Australian evaluation of alliance issues centred on China, see Sydney Morning Herald (2005a). For the argument that the rise of China made ANZUS increasingly important, see Tow (2004c).

6. For conflicting assessments of the implications and strategic value of the bilateral alliance see, for example, Burchill (2003), George (2003), and Verrier (2003: 465-9). Compare Wesley (2004).