

Chapter 5

'The Deal of the Century' – The F-16s

In November 1998 the National-led Coalition Government, at the same time that it decided not to pursue the purchase of a third ANZAC frigate, made a decision to lease 28 F-16 A/B aircraft from the United States. That same month, the Interim Report of the Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade Committee, *Inquiry into Defence Beyond 2000* was published.¹ In contrast to the Government's decision, the Report challenged whether it was necessary to retain an air combat wing at all. The following year the Labour Party returned to power leading a coalition government, and had already indicated that it would review the F-16 lease decision. In order to do so, it called for the Chair of the *Inquiry into Defence Beyond 2000* Report, the Hon. Derek Quigley, to undertake the review. The *Review* was published on 6 March 2000,² and the Government announced on 20 March that it would not proceed with the lease arrangements entered into by the previous Government.

This chapter traces the events leading up to the National-led Government's decision to lease 28 F-16s, and the subsequent decision by the Labour-led coalition to cancel the lease, highlighting the critical elements which came to bear as the decision to lease was made, and then unmade. Subsequently I report on the decision to abandon the Royal New Zealand Air Force (RNZAF) strike air combat wing, and the disbandment of No. 2, No. 14 and No. 75 Squadrons in December 2001.

History and Background

For over three decades, the McDonnell Douglas A-4K and TA-4K served as New Zealand's strike aircraft. The 1966 Defence White Paper reinforced the need for the RNZAF to continue to operate in combat, transport and maritime roles.³ By this stage, the *Canberra* bombers of No. 14 Squadron, which had been introduced in 1959, were seen to need replacement by 1970. British fighter production had been axed by the 1957 White Paper, and attention turned to the United States, which had several aircraft which might be suitable. Types considered by the RNZAF during 1967 included the Northrop F-5E *Tiger*, McDonnell Douglas F-4E *Phantom* and A-4E *Skyhawk*, and the General Dynamics F-111. Ultimately the McDonnell Douglas A-4E *Skyhawk* was selected, and in April 1968 14 were ordered at a cost of \$NZ24.65 million.⁴ Designated A-4K (K for *Kiwi*), the aircraft were essentially the A-4E with minor changes as specified by the RNZAF. The 10 A-4K and 4 TA-4K aircraft arrived in Auckland on board the USS *Okinawa* on 17 May 1970, although the uninsured aircraft were almost lost at sea. After

leaving Pearl Harbor in Hawaii, the aircraft carrier hit a storm with 80 knot winds. The captain considered rolling the aircraft into the sea to save his ship, but the storm abated just in time to save them.⁵ The aircraft were officially taken into service in June 1970, with No. 75 Squadron.

The decision to purchase the A-4 *Skyhawk* met with some criticism within the RNZAF, but the aircraft, first flown in 1954, had demonstrated its capability by 1968 when New Zealand placed the order: it was at that stage still the mainstay of the US Navy and US Marine Corps attack wings, and had been well-proven in combat in the Vietnam War.⁶

The aircraft's general capability for close air support was sufficient for the tasks expected of it in 1970, but by the time of the 1983 *Defence Review* an extended range of tasks was anticipated, including maritime strike, counter-air, sea and land interdiction and close air support. The RNZAF considered three options at the time: the acquisition of more capable second-hand aircraft; new aircraft; or the upgrade of the A-4 *Skyhawk*. In 1983 the RNZAF evaluation group reviewed a number of new aircraft, and favoured the purchase of new F-16s. The program cost was to be NZ\$900 million, including spares and equipment, and was seen as prohibitive. A decision was then taken to considerably upgrade the current aircraft. The 1983 *Defence Review* commented:

The A4-K *Skyhawk* aircraft have served us well in the attack role. The 1978 Review identified a requirement to upgrade the aircraft's navigation and weapon delivery systems and planning to do so is well advanced. It has since been established that a structural refurbishment programme will also be necessary to extend the life of the aircraft.

The *Review* went on:

In addition to the planned upgrading programme, consideration has been given to acquiring additional aircraft. Augmenting the present force would offset basic performance limitations, replace those lost in service and provide for attrition during the aircraft's remaining life.⁷

The Royal Australian Navy (RAN) had a number of A-4 *Skyhawks* which were surplus to its requirements after its aircraft carrier had been scrapped in 1982. In 1984 the New Zealand Government approved the purchase of eight single-seat A-4Gs and two TA-4G two-seat trainers. The package deal cost NZ\$40 million, including spares and equipment, and No. 2 Squadron was reformed to accept the aircraft.

The avionics upgrade was to be extremely comprehensive. The Labour Government gave its approval for a NZ\$140 million modernisation plan in May 1985. The upgrade was anticipated to give the aircraft an avionics suite comparable to an F-16C, significantly enhancing the aircraft's strike capability

and intended to give it an operational capability of 90 per cent of an F-16C for 15 per cent of the cost—a variation on the classic Kiwi 80/20 solution.⁸ Despite the cooling of NZ–US relations over the anti-nuclear ships debacle, the US Congress gave its approval for the technology transfer in December 1985, and the contract with Lear Siegler was signed in 1986 by the Minister of Defence, the Hon. Frank O'Flynn. The importance of this work was reinforced by the 1987 *Review of Defence Policy*, which said:

The RNZAF must be able to respond immediately and, if it becomes necessary, to engage hostile ships and submarines, at some distance from New Zealand. Maintaining this ability is an important part of deterrence: ensuring this type of threatening situation does not eventuate. Work currently underway on modernising the *Skyhawks* will greatly increase effectiveness in this regard.⁹

The first 'Kahu' *Skyhawk* was returned to service and flown in June 1988, and the last in March 1991.

The value of the upgrade was immediately apparent. Wing Commander Ian Gore, who led No. 75 Squadron on a series of exercises with Australian, Malaysian, Singaporean, and Thai air forces in 1991 and 1992 said: 'The *Skyhawk* has gone from an aircraft with no systems you could rely on, to one with the capability of modern front-line fighters, at a fraction of the cost.'¹⁰ Flight Lieutenant Murray Neilson, who also flew on those exercises, further noted: 'We were constantly surprised how well we performed in air-to-air combat against superior aircraft, especially the F-16 ... *Kahu* has brought the *Skyhawk* into the 1990s.'¹¹

The aircraft however still had shortcomings; they were noticeably slower than their modern counterparts when fully laden with weapons, and the *Maverick* missiles were only effective for a range of five miles—insufficient for a realistic attack on a modern warship. Nevertheless, Gore still saw *Kahu* as a major success: 'Considering we did so well against aircraft we aspired to replace the *Skyhawk* with—the F-16 and the *Harrier*—the update was an inspired choice.'¹²

At the time of the 1997 *Defence Assessment*, the decision was made to maintain an Air Combat Force comprising A-4 *Skyhawks*, which would be replaced by a suitable aircraft in due course. The 1997 White Paper commented further: 'The aircraft are old but sturdy. They have been rewinged and seven years ago were given a major upgrade. They have sufficient life left to perform effectively into the next decade.'¹³

In commenting on the Government's decisions, the *New Zealand Herald* noted: 'It is understood there is no immediate plan to replace the Air Force's 19 elderly *Skyhawk* fighter-bombers, but longer-term purchases are not ruled out.'¹⁴ It was, in fact, to be no time at all before new purchases were considered.

'The Deal of the Century'¹⁵ — The Lease of the F-16s

'Since the publication of the White Paper, an opportunity to acquire F-16 aircraft has arisen,' said the Chief of Air Staff, Air Vice-Marshal Carey Adamson in an *RNZAF News Special* in December 1998.¹⁶ The article went on to say that a joint RNZAF–MoD Team had conducted an evaluation of the aircraft and discussed issues around the potential lease of the aircraft whilst visiting the United States in September 1998, and a decision on whether to proceed with the acquisition was expected before the end of the year.

The United States Government had offered New Zealand the opportunity to acquire 28 F-16s, originally brought for Pakistan, but embargoed in 1990 because of US concerns over Pakistan's desire to develop nuclear weapons.¹⁷ The planes on offer consisted of 13 single-seater F-16A-150CU and 15 two-seater F-16B-150CU, which had been stored at a desert US Air Force base in Arizona since they were built in 1991 and 1992. The planes were effectively almost new, with each of them having flown for only three or four hours.

Gerald Hensley, at the time Secretary of Defence, had originally been approached in 1996 about the possibility of the F-16s being made available to New Zealand:

I was at the ASEAN Regional Forum Meeting in Kuala Lumpur. I recall Kurt Campbell, Deputy Secretary said to me over dinner, 'Why don't you buy the F-16s?—we'll give you a good price'. That was in 1996.¹⁸ I regret saying it now, but I replied that we were in the middle of the latest Defence Review, and could do nothing until it was completed.¹⁹

Subsequently, in May of 1998, the Secretary of Defence approached Sir Wilson Whineray to chair the Air Combat Capability Study, the timing of which

has largely been determined by the need for a decision on the opportunity to purchase second-hand, but little used F-16 fighter aircraft, the so-called 'Peacegate' aircraft. Before a decision can be made on these aircraft, Defence first needs to determine what type of air combat capability is required.²⁰

The Report (the Whineray Report) went into some detail to determine what type of air combat capability was required, and explored a broad range of capability options to assess how each might fulfil New Zealand's requirements. The study was unequivocal in its findings that the range of operational roles able to be carried out by an air combat capability should remain Close Air Support, Air Interdiction and Maritime Strike. These three roles were said to stand out in terms of their high military and policy utility for a New Zealand air combat capability.

The study explored the capabilities of the current A-4K *Skyhawk*, F-16 C/D, F-16 A/B, Light attack Aircraft, and a combination of Attack Helicopter and P-3K *Orion*. These five options were subject to detailed analysis, and Sir Wilson Whineray commented:

This very clearly showed that the type of capability New Zealand requires is of a modern multi-role fighter aircraft; the F-16 C/D was used to represent such a capability in the study. This was by far the best option. None of the other options performed nearly as well.²¹

Notwithstanding these comments, the Report went on to say:

The initial production fourth generation multi-role fighter capability represented in the study by the F-16 A/B was found to be highly effective across almost all of the requirements New Zealand anticipates. While the F-16 A/B would need updating to meet New Zealand requirements, it is a fourth generation aircraft with upgrade potential to a capability standard similar to that of an F-16 C/D.²²

Max Bradford, the Minister of Defence, was very keen to see the *Skyhawks* replaced by the F-16s, partly because of growing concern about their structural integrity: 'I was getting some disturbing reports from the RNZAF about the state of the airframes, and the expected life of the aircraft would be less than anticipated because of structural problems with their tails.'²³ In November 1998 the Minister proposed to Cabinet that New Zealand should agree in principle to the proposal to negotiate the lease of 28 F-16 A/B aircraft. That same month, it was reported that the *Skyhawk* fleet was to undergo Life of Type testing, to determine whether the aircraft could remain airworthy until their anticipated retirement around 2005. The proposal to Cabinet sought approval to bring forward the replacement of the A-4K *Skyhawk*, and commented that 'mechanical airframe systems such as the engine, hydraulics and fuel systems ... are subject to the effects of age, declining reliability and a lack of readily available support from equipment manufacturers'.²⁴

Leasing the aircraft was proposed over two 5-year periods, with an average cost to lease all 28 aircraft of NZ\$12.5 million per year. There was, in addition to the lease cost, a capital cost estimated at NZ\$204.5 million to reactivate the aircraft and purchase spares and training. Savings of \$54 million were anticipated if the purchase went ahead, as the update to extend the life of the A-4K *Skyhawks* would not be necessary. It was also expected that the sale of the *Skyhawks* would realise 'a meaningful return'.²⁵ In total, it was estimated that the leasing of the F-16s would save NZ\$431 million over the life of the aircraft, compared to purchasing new aircraft early in the next century.

In making a case for the lease of the F-16s, Max Bradford introduced an updated Defence 10 Year Capital Plan.²⁶ Within this, the Minister recognised

the issue of trade-offs and commented that the new plan necessitated a change in project timings, 'slipping C-130 replacement to smooth a potential funding bulge',²⁷ and requiring, 'an extended delivery of armoured vehicles.'²⁸

Treasury's response to the Capital Plan was cool, indicating that 'the Plan does not fit within the envelope of increased capital and operating funding signalled by the Defence Assessment'.²⁹ Treasury went on and said that the planned upgrade for the Army, purchase of a third ANZAC frigate, leasing the F-16s and replacing the C-130 *Hercules* could not be undertaken within the funding envelope.³⁰ Taking account of external influences, the proposal paper for the lease of the F-16s advised:

The US has asked us to make a ... stronger commitment to increased defence spending, and an acknowledgement that the unfinished business needs to be addressed. ... A decision in principle to lease the F-16s ... would be very well received by the US Government and it would be a positive factor in its consideration of forward movement in our defence relationship.³¹

Gordon Campbell was somewhat blunter when commenting upon the Australian viewpoint: 'The decision to get them is also meant to appease the Australians. ... If we hadn't decided to get the F-16s, the Australians would probably have gone completely ballistic.'³²

Once the decision in principle had been made, Campbell asked Max Bradford when an 'iron-clad agreement' would be made, 'one that not even an incoming Labour government could overturn?'³³ The Minister replied: 'We would want to make pretty rapid progress on this ... February, March, early April.'³⁴ In the event it was to be July before the lease deal was signed—and it was not as iron-clad as some might have hoped for. Whilst the Minister was emphasising the potential savings involved in the lease deal, questions were being raised elsewhere about whether an air combat force was necessary at all. The *Inquiry into Defence Beyond 2000*, Interim Report of the Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade Committee was also published in November 1998. Whilst the Report acknowledged that there were national interest arguments in favour of keeping an air combat force, it noted that in 28 years the A-4 *Skyhawks* had never been used in combat. The Report went on to say:

Air combat forces are expensive to retain and operate (14 per cent of the NZDF budget), and possibly beyond New Zealand's economic capacity to keep up to date without detracting from other more necessary military capabilities. ... We believe that the NZDF has two options: either disband the jet training and strike capability, on purely financial grounds, or to replace the current A4s with more modern combat aircraft on the basis of their capacity to contribute to the advancement of the country's

national interest considered alongside other competing expenditure priorities.³⁵

On 1 December 1998, having lost the battle over the third frigate, the Minister was nevertheless able to announce: 'The A-4K *Skyhawks* air combat force will be replaced with 28 F-16 A/B aircraft on lease from the United States. Final negotiations on lease terms, and on the purchase of spares and support equipment, have to be completed.'³⁶

In the debate over the choice of the F-16, A/B Group Captain Ian Brunton, Assistant Chief of Air Staff, RNZAF, noted that the F-16 had been the workhorse of the 1991 Gulf War, and that there were now 4000 F-16s worldwide.³⁷ However, in commenting on the importance of up-to-date technology in contemporary conflict, one US analyst said:

The most significant technologies in the (Gulf War) conflict were not necessarily weapons but those that allowed allied forces to identify and track targets rapidly; gather, process, evaluate and distribute information; decide priorities for targeting; navigate on the ground, in the air, and at sea; or command and control.³⁸

Gordon Campbell, in an article entitled 'Pop Gun' in the *New Zealand Listener*, published a month after the lease deal was announced, highlighted that the F-16s were fitted only with 'secure UHF radios'³⁹ and were without the data-link modems that allowed the processing and distribution of information seen as essential in modern combat. The aircraft were fitted with the same radar as the A-4 *Skyhawks*, without the capability to identify multiple threats and decide the level of threat and order of response. Campbell asserted: 'One thing is clear ... although these Block 15 A/Bs outclass our venerable *Skyhawks*, they are themselves already outdated.'⁴⁰ Brunton responded: 'The article is technically incorrect and paints a very misleading picture of the F-16 acquisition.'⁴¹ Nevertheless, he did acknowledge that 'the computers and display systems in our aircraft are, however, becoming dated and will require upgrading'.⁴² Notwithstanding this comment, Brunton assured that the F-16s would be 'more than capable of defending themselves.'⁴³ Quigley remained to be convinced, saying some seven months later that 'the pilots who fly our F-16 A/B aircraft, if the acquisition were to go ahead, would face serious disadvantages in combat'.⁴⁴

Once again, in responding to the *Inquiry into Defence Beyond 2000*, the Government argued that the aircraft would be capable of fulfilling the tasks required of them without further upgrading, but that they would 'eventually receive a mid-life upgrade'.⁴⁵ In his response to Campbell's article, Brunton added:

It is unnecessary for us to proceed with MLU (Mid-Life Upgrade) at this time. Furthermore, it makes sense for us to gain experience operating

the aircraft for a period so that we are in a better position to choose the best update option in due course.⁴⁶

It seemed to me that these were the very sentiments expressed at the time that an unmodified HMNZS *Charles Upham* was brought into service.

In noting that the aircraft were not due to arrive until mid-2001, Helen Clark, the Leader of the Opposition, commented that this '[gave] an incoming government plenty of time to review the position.'⁴⁷ The following year was to be an election year, and the opportunity to purchase the F-16s, whilst not as controversial as the issue of the third frigate, was nonetheless to be at the forefront as the election approached.

To Lease or Not to Lease – The 1999 Question

Not surprisingly, the Chief of Air Staff, Air Vice Marshal Carey Adamson, was delighted with the Government's decision. In an article in the December edition of *RNZAF News*, he commented:

The F-16 will maintain the roles of maritime attack, air-interdiction and close air support and, in doing so, will continue to defend New Zealand's strategic interests far more effectively and capably than the *Skyhawk* has been able to. Our allies and regional neighbours will see this as a major increase in the credibility of our national commitment to peace and security in the region.⁴⁸

Helen Clark was somewhat less enthusiastic about the proposed lease deal, saying that 'the whole thinking and strategy behind it is warped'.⁴⁹ However, the importance of maintaining an air strike capability was further highlighted by the Secretary of Defence Gerald Hensley the following year:

Maintenance of an air strike capability in particular is critical to our role in the principle FPDA activity; that of the air defence of Malaysia and Singapore.⁵⁰ ... We see New Zealand and Australia as a single strategic entity. As with the FPDA, our air combat force plays an important role in this relationship.⁵¹

Approval for the lease deal was announced by the Minister of Defence on 26 July 1999. Although the lease costs were to be the same as those announced the previous December, at NZ\$124.8 million (excluding GST) the start-up package had increased by NZ\$34 million to NZ\$238 million. Nonetheless it was still estimated that the deal would save some NZ\$350 million compared with purchasing new aircraft the following century. The 10-year lease agreement was signed two days later in Washington, DC, by the Attorney General, the Right Honourable Sir Douglas Graham. In commenting on the deal, the Minister of Defence said: 'It gives us a new aircraft at a price we simply couldn't afford to

pass up. ... The lease is seen by Treasury as being "the least cost option" to acquire this increase in air combat capability.⁵²

The following month the final version of *Inquiry into Defence Beyond 2000* was released. In this Report, the Committee echoed much of what had been indicated in the Interim Report:

For us, the important criterion alongside affordability for setting priorities for investment in the NZDF is the utility of the force elements that New Zealand maintains. We see air combat forces as being of lesser utility, given competing demands for scarce NZDF resources, than the other force elements maintained by the NZDF.⁵³

The Report recommended that, were the air combat force to be retained, the possibility of down-sizing to a smaller force of better armed aircraft should be considered, whilst reviewing the lease of the F-16s. Max Bradford, not surprisingly, was opposed to the majority findings of the Report, indicating that the recommendations, if implemented, would fundamentally change New Zealand's defence relationship with Australia, 'which would be a matter of serious concern'.⁵⁴ Helen Clark, on the other hand, was strongly supportive of the Report's findings, and indicated that a Labour Government would adopt the recommendations: 'I'd be surprised if our policy when released didn't fairly closely shadow (the report).'⁵⁵

At a pre-election seminar held on 21 October 1999, Phil Goff reinforced this view:

Labour opposes the decision to invest what will amount to \$700 million on the F-16 A/B jet aircraft. It also opposes the purchase of further ANZAC frigates. Neither can be considered a priority if peace keeping is to continue to be the focus of deployment of our armed forces.

In opting for frigates and F-16s, the National Government has put display ahead of utility. It has been concerned more about pleasing military chiefs in Australia and the United States, than about meeting the practical needs arising from the responsibilities we are actually placing on our armed forces.⁵⁶

When Wayne Mapp spoke at the same seminar on National's Foreign and Defence Policy, he portrayed National's diametrically opposing view, reinforcing the importance of the development of the relationship with the United States:

The Air Force requirements are of a different character. Everyone accepts the need for new strategic air transport and upgraded maritime surveillance. The sharp differences settle on the lease of the F-16s. ... The Air Combat Force is not just about military utility. It is also about restoring our Defence relationships, particularly with the United States.

If we had failed to accept the extremely favourable lease arrangements for the F-16s, our friends and allies would question our commitment to the security of the region. Our overall relationship with the United States would have been severely damaged.⁵⁷

When Labour's defence policy was released in November, it did in fact closely follow the Report, and confirmed opposition to the lease of the F-16s. Geoff Braybrooke, Labour's defence spokesperson, said it was wrong to spend such a large proportion of the defence budget on 'showpiece' items like the F-16s, whilst the New Zealand Army was being sent into war zones such as East Timor with obsolete equipment. As the two major parties entered the election race, they provided the New Zealand public with two very clear and very different views on defence, reflecting two different views of New Zealand's role in the world. Later that month the New Zealand public endorsed Labour's view and Labour came to power with a new Coalition government. Following the first meeting of the new Cabinet in December, Helen Clark confirmed that there was insufficient money available for increased spending for defence, and that removing the F-16 lease deal would assist with meeting other priorities: 'We'd need to take advice on that. That could be enough.'⁵⁸

The Death of New Zealand's 'Flying Falcon' – The Final F-16 Decision

In seeking advice on the lease deal, Clark turned to former ACT MP Derek Quigley, the former chair of the Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade Committee, and author of *Inquiry into Defence Beyond 2000*. In that Report, Quigley raised concerns about the difficulty the Committee had had in accessing adequate information about the F-16 lease. On 20 December 1999, Cabinet determined the terms of reference for an independent review of the proposal to lease the 28 F-16 aircraft, and Quigley was to have access to a much wider range of information than had previously been made available to him. The *Review* was urgent as, amongst other things, in Quigley's own words, 'the meter [was] running'.⁵⁹

Throughout the debate on the lease of the F-16s, the Labour Party had been opposed to their acquisition. However, there were many who were concerned about the impact that the cancellation might have on New Zealand's relationship with Australia and the United States. Associate Professor Stephen Hoadley from the University of Auckland commented that the F-16 lease deal was a cooperative step, showing 'both Washington and Canberra that Wellington is a good international citizen and a serious team player', and that 'its cancellation risks relegation of New Zealand to the margins of the diplomatic map'.⁶⁰ John Armstrong, the *New Zealand Herald's* political editor, warned that 'the Coalition cabinet is on a collision course with Canberra and Washington'.⁶¹ He went on to say that 'cancellation would go down badly in Australia'.⁶² This sentiment

was echoed on other pages of the *New Zealand Herald* that day, with Greg Ansley, the Canberra bureau chief indicating that a cancellation of the lease would lead to 'anger and dismay'.⁶³ Max Bradford of course felt the deal was essential to maintain credibility with New Zealand's neighbours.⁶⁴

However, others were less concerned. The [Christchurch] *Press* saw the deal as 'ill-conceived in the first place',⁶⁵ and suggested that there should be no surprise if Quigley advised that the decision should be reversed. The Prime Minister indicated that she did not see any cooling in New Zealand's relationship with the United States.⁶⁶ Professor Desmond Ball, from The Australian National University in Canberra, said:

I don't think anyone would worry about them getting rid of the F-16s because there was no point in having them in the first place. Most of the relevant areas in the (Australian) Department of Defence were dumbfounded when the F-16s were acquired. ... It was hard to understand to begin with.⁶⁷

The editorial in *The Independent Business Weekly* the following week reinforced this view:

As for the reaction in Australia ... let's not forget officials there were aghast when we announced the F-16 deal in the first place. Their belief ... is unlikely to be different now.⁶⁸

The *Review* was published on 6 March 2000, and sought to provide advice which would help the New Zealand Government determine whether the lease deal should be cancelled, deferred, amended or confirmed. It also considered whether the F-16 deal would have an adverse effect on other urgent defence priorities, and whether the deal locked the NZDF into a capability that was of significant cost and limited utility.

From the start, Quigley made the point that the review of the lease proposal also 'inevitably involved a much more fundamental consideration of New Zealand defence policy and force capabilities'.⁶⁹ He went on to suggest that the process required the review to consider how New Zealand wished to see itself, and what sort of tasks the nation wanted New Zealand defence forces to undertake. That is, what was New Zealand's role in the world? Reflecting upon the role of external influences, Quigley observed:

The F-16 package involves more than merely upgrading a major combat capability. It appears to reflect a conscious decision by the US Administration to redefine defence relationships with New Zealand and enable us to play—in *its eyes*—a more effective role in regional security.⁷⁰

The Report noted that whilst funding had already been committed to the F-16 aircraft—which had not been signalled in the 1997 *Defence*

Assessment—there were still 11 outstanding projects which were deemed to be Priority One in November 1998, and to which funds had yet to be allocated. Of these projects, six were for the New Zealand Army, three for the RNZAF, and two for the RNZN. They were:

- The balance of the Army Direct Fire Support weapons
- Army Anti-Armour Weapons
- Armoured Vehicle Replacement
- Landrover Replacement
- Reconnaissance Vehicles
- Army Communications
- *Orion* Upgrade (Project *Sirius*)
- *Iriquois* Life Extension
- C-130 Replacement/Upgrade
- Replacement of HMNZS *Canterbury*
- Conversion of HMNZS *Charles Upham*

Quigley was highly critical that there was no adequate process in place for setting priorities, and that projects were approved, or not, when they came to the top of the list after tendering—or if they were the subject, such as the F-16s of an ‘opportunity purchase’.

In the *Review*, he also sought to clarify the Select Committee’s views on the Army, highlighting that:

The majority of the Committee did not say that the Army should be given permanent priority ahead of everything else. It said that given the ‘better shape’ of some other force elements, deployable land force elements and the other capabilities needed to support that, should be the top priority.⁷¹

Quigley added that ‘the (then) Government members on the Committee agreed that “the development of a well-equipped motorised infantry force is the top priority in the re-equipping of the NZDF”’.⁷²

Whilst acknowledging that determining overall defence priorities was not within the terms of reference of the *Review*, he noted that determining the impact of the F-16 lease on other defence requirements was within the terms of reference. The summary of the *Review* clearly stated the dilemma that was being faced by the Government. At the time of the 1997 *Defence Assessment*, it suggested, an extra injection of NZ\$509 million was foreseen for the following 10 year period. By the time of the *Review*, that figure had increased to NZ\$1 billion, and did not include an extra NZ\$583 million required over the following three years to proceed with replacing Army communications equipment, light armoured and light operational vehicles, and Project *Sirius*. The *Review* made the point: ‘It is against this background that the F-16 project needs to be considered.’⁷³

The *Review* went on to confirm the not-inconsiderable costs involved in the project—NZ\$1 billion of capital injection if the aircraft were leased, then purchased, and received the recommended upgrades. Contrasted with this additional cost, up to NZ\$140 million per annum could be saved if the air combat force was disbanded.

The recommendations that the *Review* made were significant. Quigley noted: 'Clearly, New Zealand does not currently need 22 operational aircraft. After all, the RNZAF coped with 14 *Skyhawks* from mid-1970 to the mid-1980s with no visible diminution of effect.' He further concluded:

The air combat capability also needs to be seen in a broader context. On the one hand, it provides the Government with choice in responding to international security and peacekeeping operations, particularly if the capability is upgraded. On the other hand, the savings in operating and capital costs from disbanding the air combat capability could be applied to other more urgent NZDF priorities. What has become apparent, however, is the feasibility of acquiring fewer F-16s to retain a core combat capability.⁷⁴

In light of this, and further analysis of the savings that could be made by leasing a smaller number of aircraft, the recommendations of the *Review* were:

1. That the New Zealand Government consider approaching the US Government with a view to renegotiating the current F-16 package to include a lesser number of aircraft.
2. That all Defence projects be reviewed as a matter of urgency, on a project by project basis, with a view to prioritising them on the basis of their capacity—judged from an NZDF-wide perspective—to advance New Zealand's national interests.
3. That steps be taken to implement, as soon as practicable, all those aspects of the 1998 *National Real Estate Consolidation Strategy* that are already agreed by NZDF, and that decisions be taken on the remainder.
4. That those parts of the 1991 *Review of Defence Funding* as yet unimplemented be urgently considered and, where relevant, adopted.⁷⁵

On the day that the report was published, Helen Clark said it was clear where the report was headed:

It will probably say something like this: "If major capital investment in the airstrike arm of the Air Force was your top priority right now, and if you could afford it, this might be a reasonable deal. But if neither of these ifs applies, then the Government has every justification of looking again".⁷⁶

For several months Clark had made it clear that neither of the 'ifs' applied. Two weeks after the publication of the *Review*, following a meeting of cabinet, the Government announced that it would not be proceeding with the lease arrangements. Clark released a statement on Monday 20 March 2000 clarifying the reasons for the decision:

Mr Quigley made four recommendations ... three of which the Government will act on. The fourth recommendation in his report was that the Government should consider approaching the United States Government with a view to renegotiating the current F-16 purchase to include a smaller number of aircraft. The Government has decided not to take that course. We will be exercising New Zealand's right to withdraw from the lease arrangement. ... While reducing the number of F-16s would have alleviated the immediate funding problem inherent in this acquisition, it would not have removed it. ... In addition, such a decision would have prejudged the broader question of whether New Zealand should retain an air combat capability. That is a matter the government wants to take more time to address.⁷⁷

Whilst Clark did acknowledge that the lease arrangement for the F-16 seemed a good one, she reiterated that this would only be the case if upgrading the air combat capability was a priority: 'The mere existence of a bargain at a sale is not a reason for buying it.'⁷⁸ In speaking to the Government's decision, the Prime Minister went on to say:

Mr Quigley's report describes the Defence Force's fiscal position as parlous. Its capital expenditure requirement is unsustainable. It is also experiencing cash flow problems which would require at least a doubling of the capital injection contemplated in 1997. Unfortunately there is no priority setting in the New Zealand Defence Force which effectively and consistently links individual activities or projects to the government's most pressing national security concerns. *Getting rationality and coherence into defence planning and priority setting is now at the top of the coalition government's agenda.*⁷⁹

Planning for an affordable, well-equipped NZDF was clearly a priority for the new Government; the lease of the F-16s, just as clearly, was not.

Disbanding the Air Combat Force

Interestingly, Derek Quigley had noted that in 1991 Wayne Mapp⁸⁰ had argued in an article entitled 'Restructuring New Zealand's Defence Force' that the air strike force 'must be the first element to be either eliminated or integrated into

the Australian Armed Forces'.⁸¹ Mapp was clear at the time about what he felt about the utility of the Air Combat Force:

From the New Zealand perspective, the force most suitable for reduction is the air force. The strike role of the A4 *Skyhawks* is almost of no relevance except in medium to high level operations. ... The *Orions* serve an important role. With suitable upgrading with *Harpoon* missiles they could readily take over the full maritime strike role.⁸²

Labour had given every indication that they agreed with these sentiments regarding the strike role. In February 2001 the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet produced a report, *Review of the Options for an Air Combat Capability*, which spelt out three possible options for the future of the air combat force. These three options were:

1. Retain the air combat force at present levels;
2. Retain a reduced air combat force of 14 strike aircraft; or
3. Disband the air combat force.

The *Review* noted that, with Option 2, there would be insufficient savings realised for the rebuilding of the rest of the NZDF unless it was accompanied by major cuts in other areas.⁸³ With Option 3, it was anticipated that savings would be produced which, 'as well as the avoidance of further capital investment in the air combat force, would assist in the rebuilding of the NZDF, significantly reducing the need for additional funding'.⁸⁴

Confirming Quigley's assertion that 'to cancel the F-16 contract ... is considered tantamount to disbanding the RNZAF's combat capability',⁸⁵ on 8 May 2001 Clark confirmed that the New Zealand Government had decided to disband the air combat wing.⁸⁶ The response from some quarters in Australia was stinging. The following day the *Australian* ran the headline 'NZ abandons Anzac tradition'. The article went on to note: 'New Zealand yesterday abandoned 85 years of Anzac tradition by scaling down its military power,'⁸⁷ although it added that 'John Howard refrained from criticising the move yesterday, saying "What New Zealand does with New Zealand's defence force is a matter for New Zealand."' ⁸⁸ Clark commented: 'Nothing about anything we've done in Defence should have been a surprise. It was all in the manifesto, as I keep pointing out.'⁸⁹

Some commentators were pragmatic in their response to Labour's decision. Dick Gentles, former Deputy Secretary, Policy and Planning within the Ministry of Defence said:

The Air Combat Force had very little utility to this government. The opportunity cost was enormous, and the *Skyhawks* would never have been seriously considered for deployment. I think it was probably the

right decision—it was certainly a brave one. Mark Burton did, though, get a \$1 billion commitment for defence over the next 10 years.⁹⁰

Stewart Woodman, Professor at the Australian Defence Force Academy at the University of New South Wales, had been a significant critic of what he considered a moribund approach to defence planning outlined in SONZD 97.⁹¹ He commented: ‘What utility would they really have had for the NZDF? F-16s would look funny sitting at the end of a runway in the Solomons.’⁹²

Lieutenant General Lloyd Campbell, Chief of the Air Staff, Canadian Air Force, commented: ‘As a friend and ally (and also former fighter pilot) I consider this (disbandment) most unfortunate. However, I also recognise the Government has spoken and it is now time to salute and get on with life.’⁹³

No. 2, No. 14 and No. 75 Squadron were officially disbanded at Ohakea on 13 December 2001.⁹⁴ The last fully airworthy A-4 *Skyhawk* flew out of Ohakea airbase on 30 July 2004, to join the rest of the mothballed fleet of *Skyhawks* at RNZAF Woodburn in Blenheim.⁹⁵

Summary

The 1997 White Paper indicated that the defence policy that had been set out in the previous 1991 White Paper was still the most appropriate to guide policy decision-making: ‘Self-Reliance in Partnership’ remained the cornerstone of Defence Policy.⁹⁶ There was a reaffirmation of the balanced force approach, and the philosophy of incrementalism was reinforced:

The Government has concluded that for the near-to-medium term New Zealand’s security interests are best served within the structural framework that has evolved over the past several decades. This is an acknowledgement that our Army, Air and Naval forces have served us well, and with some shift in force configuration would continue to do so.⁹⁷

With regards to the future of the Air Combat Force, the White Paper was unequivocal in its support. Taking account of New Zealand’s role in the world and external influences it commented:

We require an **air combat capability** (sic) to deal with surface threats and be capable of providing air support for both ground and naval forces. It must be capable of operating as part of a larger force, either in support of New Zealand naval and land forces, or as part of a combined force as a New Zealand contribution to collective defence.⁹⁸

The ‘opportunity purchase’ of the 28 F-16 A/B fighters, allowed for the possibility of upgrading the air combat capability, whilst enhancing relationships with both Australia and the United States. Trade-offs also played a part as it was

a way of softening the blow of not purchasing a third ANZAC frigate. A further trade-off though was to be further delays in re-equipping the New Zealand Army (and this was where bureaucratic politics came in), and the air transport capability of the RNZAF. In order to develop an enhanced air combat capability, the National Coalition was prepared to once more delay Priority One projects and set acquisition targets which Treasury clearly saw as unattainable within the funding envelope.

When the Labour-led Coalition came to power, it was on the clear basis that they would not support the F-16 purchase, and that the Government was intent on following an independent policy on defence purchases. Whilst there were many dissenting voices, there was nonetheless clear public support for Labour's position. In a parliamentary debate on the issue of the F-16s, Clark was able to note public opinion saying: 'I thought I saw last night that 68 per cent of people did not want the planes bought.'⁹⁹ When weighing up the options available for future defence expenditure, the Labour-led Government quickly chose to disband the air combat capability, redefining New Zealand's role in the world with its requirement 'for well-equipped, combat trained land forces which are also able to act as effective peacekeepers, supported by the Navy and Air Force'.¹⁰⁰ Labour viewed external influences and the world situation quite differently from National, with Clark echoing the sentiment expressed by Norman Kirk almost 30 years previously:

We're quite widely respected for being an independent-minded small Western nation. We don't carry other people's agendas ... what matters to me is that when people hear New Zealand speak they know that's New Zealand speaking, not something someone else just whispered in its ear.¹⁰¹

To give substance to this outlook, the new Government committed itself to rebuilding defence force capabilities to achieve a 'modern, sustainable Defence Force that will meet the government's defence policy objectives'.¹⁰² New Zealand was not to see F-16s in its skies.

ENDNOTES

¹ *Inquiry into Defence Beyond 2000*, Interim Report of the Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade Committee, House of Representatives, Wellington, November 1998.

² Hon. Derek Quigley, *Review of the Lease of F-16 Aircraft for the Royal New Zealand Air Force*, Wellington, 6 March 2000.

³ *Review of Defence Policy 1966*, Government Printer, Wellington, 1966, p. 16.

⁴ Matthew Wright, *Kiwi Air Power*, Reed Books, Auckland, 1998, p. 157.

⁵ Peter Clarke, 'Farewell to the RNZAF's Hotrod', *Pacific Wings*, February 2002, p. 23.

⁶ Geoffrey Bentley and Maurice Conley, *Portrait of an Air Force*, Grantham House, Wellington, 1987, pp. 154–56.

⁷ Bentley and Conley, *Portrait of an Air Force*; and *Defence Review 1983*, Government Printer, Wellington, 1983, p. 32.

- ⁸ Martyn Gosling, 'Paddy's Axe gets a New Blade', *New Zealand Defence Quarterly*, no. 1, Winter 1993, p. 29.
- ⁹ *Defence of New Zealand, Review of Defence Policy 1987*, Government Printer, Wellington, 1987, p. 36.
- ¹⁰ Wright, *Kiwi Air Power*, p. 157.
- ¹¹ Gosling, 'Paddy's Axe gets a New Blade', p. 27.
- ¹² Gosling, 'Paddy's Axe gets a New Blade', p. 30.
- ¹³ *The Shape of New Zealand's Defence, A White Paper*, Ministry of Defence, Wellington, November 1997, p. 49.
- ¹⁴ *New Zealand Herald*, 12 November 1997.
- ¹⁵ Max Bradford, Minister of Defence, reported in the *New Zealand Herald*, 2 December 1998.
- ¹⁶ 'A Year in Review: The RNZAF in 1998', *RNZAF News Special*, December 1998, p. 11.
- ¹⁷ Ian Bostock, 'NZ Air Force clinches bargain fighter deal', *Jane's Defence Weekly*, 9 December 1998, p. 3.
- ¹⁸ What was not widely discussed throughout the whole F-16 debate was that the deal with Pakistan was not the only one that had fallen through. In 1994 US President Bill Clinton's Administration had offered the F-16s to Indonesia's President Suharto. In April 1994 Indonesia agreed to buy 11 of the aircraft, and in November they were offered a 'great deal' on the remaining 17 aircraft. Whilst the Clinton Administration had banned the sale of small arms to Indonesia because of the human rights abuses attributed to the regime, there was no law preventing the sale of jet fighters. In August 1996 there were riots in Jakarta and the United States put the sale on hold, but then reversed the decision. The US Department of State's announcement said: 'A regionally respected (Indonesian) armed forces, with credible defence capabilities, that trains and operates in a non-threatening manner is an important contribution to regional stability'. However, there were allegations raised that Indonesian nationals had made illegal campaign contributions to the Democratic Party before the US elections, and Indonesia cancelled the sale after queries were raised about Suharto's close financial relationship with Clinton and other senior Democratic Party members. 'Pakistani F-16 Jets Going to US Navy, USAF', available at <<http://www.archive.newsmax.com/activities/articles/2002/6/12/154700.shtml>>, accessed 27 October 2008.
- ¹⁹ Gerald Hensley, Personal interview, 9 November 2003.
- ²⁰ Sir Wilson Whineray, *Final Report of the Air Combat Capability Policy Study*, Wellington, October 1998. Whilst the study was being undertaken, it was reported that Poland had entered the arena. 'Poland has expressed interest in leasing or buying 28 Lockheed Martin F-16 A/Bs originally intended for Pakistan. ... Sources say the Government is preparing information on the options available to Poland.' *Flight International*, 8-14 July 1998, p. 22.
- ²¹ Whineray, *Final Report of the Air Combat Capability Policy Study*, p. ii.
- ²² Whineray, *Final Report of the Air Combat Capability Policy Study*, p. v. For a complete summary of the recommendations from the Report, see Appendix 4.
- ²³ Max Bradford, Personal interview, 10 November 2003. In 2001 six *Skyhawks* were permanently grounded because of cracks in a structural component holding the tailfin to the fuselage. *New Zealand Herald*, 25 August 2001.
- ²⁴ Letter from Minister of Defence, Hon Max Bradford, 'Lease of F-16 Aircraft'. Attached to Cabinet paper CAB (98) 853.
- ²⁵ Letter from Minister of Defence, Hon Max Bradford, 'Lease of F-16 Aircraft', p. 5.
- ²⁶ Cabinet Paper CAB (1998) 854.
- ²⁷ *Defence 10 Year Capital Plan, Executive Summary*. Paper attached to Cabinet paper CAB (1998) 854.
- ²⁸ *Defence 10 Year Capital Plan, Executive Summary*.
- ²⁹ *Defence 10 Year Capital Plan, Executive Summary*, p. 14.
- ³⁰ *Defence 10 Year Capital Plan, Executive Summary*, p. 15.
- ³¹ *Lease of F-16 Aircraft*. Paper attached to Cabinet paper CAB (98) 853, p. 6.
- ³² Gordon Campbell, 'Pop Gun', *New Zealand Listener*, 9 January 1999, p. 18.
- ³³ Campbell, 'Pop Gun', p. 18.
- ³⁴ Campbell, 'Pop Gun', p. 18.
- ³⁵ *Inquiry into Defence Beyond 2000*, Interim Report of the Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade Committee, pp. 27-28.

- ³⁶ Media Release, Hon. Max Bradford, Minister of Defence, 1 December 1998.
- ³⁷ Group Captain Ian Brunton, "'Pop Gun' Article incorrect and misleading', *RNZAF News*, vol. 1, February 1999, p. 5.
- ³⁸ Jeffrey McCausland, *The Gulf Conflict: A Military Analysis*, Adelphi Paper no. 202, International Institute for Strategic Studies, London, 1993, p. 63, cited in Major G Hingsdon, 'How will the F-16 A/B lease impact on future NZDF operations?', Staff Course 2000, Whenuapai, p. 16.
- ³⁹ Campbell, 'Pop Gun', p. 20.
- ⁴⁰ Campbell, 'Pop Gun', p. 20.
- ⁴¹ Brunton, "'Pop Gun' Article incorrect and misleading', p. 4.
- ⁴² Brunton, "'Pop Gun' Article incorrect and misleading', p. 5.
- ⁴³ Brunton, "'Pop Gun' Article incorrect and misleading', p. 5.
- ⁴⁴ Derek Quigley, speech to Massey University Forum, Palmerston North, 9 September 1999, p. 6.
- ⁴⁵ *Government Response to the Interim Report of the Foreign Affairs Defence and Trade Committee*, Wellington, September 1988, p. 17.
- ⁴⁶ Brunton, "'Pop Gun' Article incorrect and misleading', p. 5.
- ⁴⁷ *New Zealand Herald*, 2 December 1998.
- ⁴⁸ Chief of Air Staff, AVM Carey Adamson, 'The F-16s and the Future', *RNZAF News*, December 1998.
- ⁴⁹ *New Zealand Herald*, 1 December 1998.
- ⁵⁰ 'Providing our friends with challenging training' was a slogan used in an RNZAF advertisement in circulation in 2000. *Air Force News*, no. 11, December 2000.
- ⁵¹ Gerald Hensley, 'New Zealand's Strategic Environment', RNZAF Air Power Seminar, Wellington, 3 May 1999, p. 6.
- ⁵² Hon. Max Bradford, Minister of Defence, Media Release, 'F-16 Lease Deal Approved', 26 July 1999.
- ⁵³ *Inquiry into Defence Beyond 2000*, Report of the Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade Committee, p. 99.
- ⁵⁴ *New Zealand Herald*, 31 August 1999.
- ⁵⁵ *Evening Standard*, 1 September 1999.
- ⁵⁶ Phil Goff, 'Preventing Aggression and Upholding International Law', in Rouben Azizian and Malcolm McNamara (eds), *New Zealand Foreign and Defence Policy at the End of the 20th Century: Views of Political Parties*, Centre for Strategic Studies, Wellington, 1991, p. 11.
- ⁵⁷ Wayne Mapp, 'Dealing with the Consequence of Victory in the Cold War', in Azizian and McNamara (eds), *New Zealand Foreign and Defence Policy at the End of the 20th Century: Views of Political Parties*, p. 9.
- ⁵⁸ *New Zealand Herald*, 14 December 1999.
- ⁵⁹ Quigley, *Review of the Lease of the F-16 Aircraft for the Royal New Zealand Air Force*, p. 4.
- ⁶⁰ Stephen Hoadley, 'F-16 diplomacy will test the mantle of Labour-Alliance Government', *National Business Review*, 10 December 1999.
- ⁶¹ John Armstrong, 'Killing F-16 deal risks allies' anger', *New Zealand Herald*, 14 December 1999.
- ⁶² Armstrong, 'Killing F-16 deal risks allies' anger'.
- ⁶³ Greg Ansley, 'F-16 retreat will be seen as more New Zealand scrounging', *New Zealand Herald*, 14 December 1999.
- ⁶⁴ Max Bradford, 'Fighters vital for our security', *New Zealand Herald*, 17 December 1999.
- ⁶⁵ Editorial, *Press*, 15 December 1999.
- ⁶⁶ *Press*, 18 December 1999.
- ⁶⁷ *Evening Post*, 16 December 1999.
- ⁶⁸ Editorial, *The Independent Business Weekly*, 22 December 1999.
- ⁶⁹ Quigley, *Review of the Lease of the F-16 Aircraft for the Royal New Zealand Air Force*, p. 1.
- ⁷⁰ Quigley, *Review of the Lease of the F-16 Aircraft for the Royal New Zealand Air Force*, p. 45. [my emphasis]
- ⁷¹ Quigley, *Review of the Lease of the F-16 Aircraft for the Royal New Zealand Air Force*, p. 17.
- ⁷² Quigley, *Review of the Lease of the F-16 Aircraft for the Royal New Zealand Air Force*, p. 17.
- ⁷³ Quigley, *Review of the Lease of the F-16 Aircraft for the Royal New Zealand Air Force*, p. 52.
- ⁷⁴ Quigley, *Review of the Lease of the F-16 Aircraft for the Royal New Zealand Air Force*, p. 47.

- ⁷⁵ Quigley, *Review of the Lease of the F-16 Aircraft for the Royal New Zealand Air Force*, p. 55.
- ⁷⁶ *New Zealand Herald*, 6 March 2000.
- ⁷⁷ Rt. Hon. Helen Clark, *Prime Ministerial Statement on F-16s Decision*, 20 March 2000, p. 1.
- ⁷⁸ Clark, *Prime Ministerial Statement on F-16s Decision*, p. 1.
- ⁷⁹ Media Statement, Prime Minister Rt. Hon. Helen Clark, 20 March 2000. [my emphasis]
- ⁸⁰ Wayne Mapp in fact was not the only senior National Party member to have considered disbanding the air strike wing. In 1997, Max Bradford was reported as wanting, 'to scrap our air combat forces entirely'. (Gordon Campbell, 'Clearing the Air', *New Zealand Listener*, 11 March 2000, p. 21). Gordon Campbell went on to note that, in an article in the *Dominion* on 10 June 1997, former Air Vice Marshall Ewan Jamieson was reported as saying: 'A few weeks ago, Cabinet Minister Max Bradford was reported as arguing that the air fighter/attack capability should be abandoned in favour of the purchase of one or more additional frigates. ... He asserted that a *Skyhawk* replacement would be "too costly" to include in future defence plans.'
- ⁸¹ Quigley, *Review of the Lease of the F-16 Aircraft for the Royal New Zealand Air Force*, p. 20.
- ⁸² Wayne Mapp, 'Restructuring New Zealand's Defence Force', *Policy*, Spring 1991, pp. 27–28.
- ⁸³ *Review of the Options for An Air Combat Capability*, Wellington, February 2001, p. 34.
- ⁸⁴ *Review of the Options for An Air Combat Capability*, Wellington, February 2001, p. 34.
- ⁸⁵ Quigley, *Review of the Lease of the F-16 Aircraft for the Royal New Zealand Air Force*, p. 46.
- ⁸⁶ Phillip McKinnon, 'New Zealand scraps air combat role', *Jane's Defence Weekly*, 16 May 2001, p. 3.
- ⁸⁷ Robert Ayson, Director of Graduate Studies in Strategy and Defence at The Australian National University, and formerly Adviser to the Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade Committee in 1998, subsequently commented: 'I think the decisions on the air combat force were expected. If New Zealand had presented the Long Term Development Plan at the time of the announcement it would have brought forth a different response.' (Personal interview, 21 July 2003)
- ⁸⁸ *Australian*, 9 May 2001.
- ⁸⁹ Brian Edwards, *helen, Portrait of a Prime Minister*, Exisle Publishing, Auckland, 2001, p. 322.
- ⁹⁰ Dick Gentles, Personal interview, 12 November 2003.
- ⁹¹ Stuart Woodman, 'Back to the Future', *New Zealand International Review*, vol. XX111, no. 2, March/April 1998, pp. 2–5.
- ⁹² Stuart Woodman, Personal interview, 18 July 2003.
- ⁹³ Lieutenant General Lloyd Campbell, 'A message from CAS, Canada', in 'Disbandment of the Air Combat Force', *Air Force News*, no. 23, January 2002, p. 24.
- ⁹⁴ Peter Clarke, 'Farewell to the RNZAF's Hot Rod', p. 26.
- ⁹⁵ *Manawatu Standard*, 31 July 2004.
- ⁹⁶ *The Shape of New Zealand's Defence, A White Paper*, p. 7.
- ⁹⁷ *The Shape of New Zealand's Defence, A White Paper*, p. 6. In its response to the *Inquiry Into Defence Beyond 2000*, the Government once more reinforced its goals and objectives, stating that it 'believes a balanced force approach enables New Zealand to deliver a realistic response to threats to our interests, and those of our regional friends and partners, and to participate in global security activities'. (*Government Response to the Report of the Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade Committee on The Inquiry Into Defence Beyond 2000*, Wellington, 1999, p. 3.)
- ⁹⁸ *The Shape of New Zealand's Defence, A White Paper*, p. 49. In its response to the *Inquiry Into Defence Beyond 2000*, the Government reiterated that it 'believes that an air combat capability is fundamental to demonstrate that New Zealand is serious about its own defence, and is committed to broader security.' (*Government Response to the Report of the Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade Committee on The Inquiry Into Defence Beyond 2000*, p. 3.)
- ⁹⁹ Rt. Hon. Helen Clark, Parliamentary debate, 21 March 2000.
- ¹⁰⁰ *The Government's Defence Policy Framework*, p. 7.
- ¹⁰¹ Edwards, *helen, Portrait of a Prime Minister*, pp. 324–25.
- ¹⁰² *A Modern, Sustainable Defence Force Matched to New Zealand's Needs*, Government Defence Statement, The Ministry of Defence, Wellington, 8 May 2001, p. 15.