

Assessing the Impact of National Political Civil Society Organisations in New Zealand

A Case Study of the Campaign Against Foreign Control of
Aotearoa (CAFCA)

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Abstract

This thesis applies a Neo-Gramscian analysis to Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) in New Zealand, in particular focusing on the Campaign Against Foreign Control of Aotearoa (CAFCA) in the political debate on Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) and as a civil society actor in an environment hostile to its aims.

CAFCA are a left-wing political CSO, active from 1975 to the present day. While the attempt by CAFCA to conduct a successful political campaign around foreign ownership in New Zealand may appear to have failed to influence government policy significantly, the longevity of the group and the maintenance of the integrity of its message suggest that, despite the political marginalisation of the group, CAFCA were still able to make a significant contribution to political debate and the public sphere on FDI in New Zealand. While CAFCA were marginalised by the growing influence of neoliberalism and related models of globalisation, both combining to ‘depoliticise’ civil society, CAFCA may also demonstrate how a CSO can play a political role in civil society, particularly in a neoliberal environment.

I provide examples of CAFCA acting as a journal of record, a resource for others, and discuss how this role can be undertaken and sustained. I also suggest that the full impact of this role cannot always be ascertained in the short term, and can best be seen as part of a longer-term view. Drawing from a detailed qualitative case study of CAFCA, I attempt to develop the possibilities for theory generation concerning the journal of record role, and offer some suggestions as to how this may contribute to the literature on CSOs.

Little in the contemporary literature acknowledges the role of political CSOs, particularly in relation to FDI and its impacts. While transnational versions of political associations are seen as the main indicators of a growing “global civil society”, Jackie Smith and Debra Minkoff highlight how the contribution of political CSOs to civil society at the national level is ignored. By highlighting CAFCA as an organisation I aim to address this lacuna in the literature, in the hope this will provide insights into how the role of similar political CSOs can be assessed.

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I dedicate this PhD to my father Des Hendren (1940-2003), from whom I gained my love of learning and books. He would have loved to have read this.

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Glossary

ABC: Anti-Bases Campaign

APEC: Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation

ARENA: Action Research and Education Network of Aotearoa

BST: Bulk Supply Tariff

CAFCA: Campaign Against Foreign Control of Aotearoa

CAFCINZ: The Campaign Against Foreign Control in New Zealand

CAFMANZ: Campaign Against Foreign Military Activities in New Zealand

CCC: Christchurch City Council

CDC: Canterbury Development Corporation

CFPS: Campaign for People's Sovereignty

CMI: Ceol & Muir Inc.

COMALCO: Commonwealth Aluminium Corporation Proprietary Ltd

CORSO: Council of Organisations for Relief Service Overseas

CPNZ: Communist Party of New Zealand

CSO: Civil Society Organisation

CWS: Christian World Service

ECNZ: Electricity Corporation of New Zealand

EIE: EIE International Corporation

FDI: Foreign Direct Investment

FMC: Federated Mountain Clubs of New Zealand

GNZ: Government of New Zealand

GOA: Government of Australia

ICIJ: The International Consortium of Investigative Journalists

JMAD: Auckland University of Technology Research Centre for Journalism, Media and Democracy.

MAI: Multilateral Agreement on Investment

NBR: National Business Review

NI: New Internationalist

NZAS: New Zealand Aluminium Smelters Ltd

NZCTU: New Zealand Council of Trade Unions

NZETS: New Zealand Emissions Trading Scheme

NZIER: New Zealand Institute of Economic Research

NZTLN: New Zealand Trade Liberalisation Network

OECD: Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development

OIC: Overseas Investment Commission

OIO: Overseas Investment Office

PBEC: Pacific Basin Economic Council

PYM: Progressive Youth Movement

RFBPS: Royal Forest and Bird Protection Society

RNZ: Radio New Zealand

RTZ: Rio Tinto Zinc Corporation

SIS: New Zealand Security Intelligence Service

SMC: Save Manapouri Campaign

TKC: Te Kotukutaku Corporation

TNZI: The New Zealand Initiative

TVNZ: Television New Zealand

USDOS: United States Department of State

USG: United States Government

WEA: Workers' Educational Association

Chapter 1: Introduction

This thesis applies a Neo-Gramscian analysis to Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) in New Zealand, in particular focusing on the Campaign Against Foreign Control of Aotearoa (CAFCA) in the political debate on Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) and as a civil society actor in an environment hostile to its aims. It will undertake an analysis of the role of radical CSOs in New Zealand using CAFCA as a case study.

1. Who are CAFCA?

CAFCA are a left wing progressive political civil society organisation (CSO). While CAFCA most closely resembles the model of a professionalised non-governmental organisation (NGO), with Murray Horton as its single paid organiser, CAFCA also adopt methods that reflect their social movement origins and continuing links with other social movement organisations. While Christchurch serves as their primary base, CAFCA have built a national profile and have members throughout New Zealand. Since 1974 CAFCA have been researching, writing, lobbying, campaigning and networking to expose and oppose all aspects of the takeover of New Zealand by transnational corporations and their local political allies¹. Reflecting their origins in the peace movement, CAFCA link the growing global dominance of transnational corporations and the military power of the world's largest nations. A leaflet from 2008 CAFCA Charter highlights what the group stands for:

“An independent Aotearoa based on policies of economic, military and political self-reliance, using Aotearoa’s resources for the benefit of the people of Aotearoa, and refusing involvement in the self-serving military and economic treaties of big foreign countries. We oppose foreign control, irrespective of which country it involves. We oppose the exploitation of Aotearoa’s people and resources by foreign companies, and any foreign military or intelligence activities in Aotearoa.”

“CAFCA is a protest group, an educational group and a Left wing progressive group. We define ourselves as “progressive nationalists” – we take the viewpoint of working people in Aotearoa. We reclaim the legitimacy of “nationalism”. We reject racism, either as used against foreigners or as used against opponents of foreign control. We are also internationalists – as we are fighting a global enemy, we work with global allies.

¹ <http://canterbury.cyberplace.co.nz/community/CAFCA/join.html>

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While the attempt by CAFCA to conduct a successful political campaign around foreign ownership in New Zealand may appear to have failed to influence government policy significantly, the longevity of the group and the maintenance of the integrity of its message suggest that, despite the political marginalisation of the group, CAFCA were still able to make a discernible contribution to political debate and the public sphere on FDI in New Zealand. While CAFCA were marginalised by the growing influence of neoliberalism and related models of globalisation, both combining to ‘depoliticise’ civil society, CAFCA may also demonstrate how a CSO can play a political role in civil society, particularly in a neoliberal environment.

Haworth observes that between the 1960s and the 1990s, the basis of the debate concerning multinational corporations and FDI “shifted markedly...economic internationalisation has become a grail not to be gainsaid, except by increasingly redundant relics of the past” (Haworth, 1997). Yet ‘globalisation sceptics’ such as Haworth, Hirst, Thompson & Bromley (2009), Wade (1996), Weiss (1997) and Kelsey (1999) highlight how the image of globalisation, particularly in its stronger versions, is based on exaggeration and myth. The sceptics point out, for example, that in many ways the world economy was more internationalised in the period prior to the First World War than it is now, and that nation states continue to play a dominant role in structuring economic space, through nationally based actors, institutions and regulatory regimes. Such analyses argue that the extent of internationalisation of the world economy has been exaggerated, and the extent to which national economic strategies are constrained by such processes has also been exaggerated (P. Q. Hirst et al., 2009). This view opens the possibility that CAFCA were not marginalised by the process of globalisation, but the exaggerated claims made on its behalf.

This thesis will focus on the economic aspects of foreign control. This emphasis mirrors the development of CAFCA as an organisation. In 1982, an American peace activist, Bob Leonard moved from California to Christchurch and immediately became a leading figure in the peace movement. He contacted Murray Horton of CAFCA and offered to specialise in monitoring the US military operations at Christchurch Airport under the cover of “Operation Deep Freeze”, which supported US scientific activity in Antarctica (Horton, 2014a). In 1982 Horton and Leonard founded the Citizens for the Demilitarisation of Harewood. In 1987 the group broadened its scope to become the Anti-Bases Campaign (ABC). Since that time, ABC have operated as a sister organisation to CAFCA, organising annual protests at the Waihopai communications base and publishing *Peace Researcher*. While the existence of ABC has allowed CAFCA to focus on the economic aspects of imperialism, CAFCA retain an imprint of

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its origins in the peace movement, allowing it to comment on the links between war, economics and foreign control.

I appreciate there would be some advantages in considering the nature of imperialism and questions concerning the autonomy of nation states in a broader context. The primary reason for adopting a narrower theoretical framework in this instance was to ensure a study of CAFCA could be contained within a PhD project.

In response to the US invasion of Iraq in 2003, the CAFCA Strategy Committee decided it could not “job share” with ABC any more, and identified the resurgence of American imperialism as a focus for the year, leading to greater discussion of the links between economic and military imperialism in *Watchdog* (Horton, 2003a, 2003b; B. Rosenberg, 2003a; J. Hendren, 2004a). Yet it does not appear that CAFCA engaged with the ‘new imperialism’ literature (Harvey, 2003; Sutcliffe, 2006; E. M. Wood, 2003) which emerged in the wake of the Iraq war - my sense is that CAFCA’s thinking on imperialism is largely grounded in the 1970s and its origins in the peace movement. Thus, greater coverage of the nature of imperialism would have required greater coverage of ABC type activities in the thesis, and would have led to a different empirical focus. It may be an avenue for future work.

2. Why Did CAFCA survive?

There have been relatively few studies of left wing political CSOs operating in New Zealand – most research focuses on the growth and development of political parties. Such left wing organisations can have a fleeting and temporary nature – this was best captured by Bruce Jesson.

“At the moment there is a remarkable diversity of groups and grouplets within the New Zealand left. In both Auckland and Wellington especially organisations, programmes and publications appear, disappear and reappear all over the place. Most Left groups are in a constant state of disintegration, feeding and being fed by the rest of the Left....Off hand I can think of seventeen radical groups operating in Auckland, give or take a few that may or may not be still going.” (B. Jesson, 1973)

In an introduction to a collection of Jesson’s writing in 2005 Andrew Sharp (2005) suggests a “volume could, and should, be written on the Left milieus in Christchurch and Auckland”. This thesis is as a targeted contribution to this discussion, with the lens on one organisation and its impact.

While many left wing organisations in New Zealand have come and gone, the longevity of CAFCA is one of its most interesting aspects, particularly as it aims, ideas and methods of

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operation often swung against the prevailing political tides. In the New Zealand case, it is rare for an activist organisation with a focus on political economy to last for over 45 years, let alone one that has lasted through three distinct periods, from the tail end of the Keynesian era (1975-1984), through a period of significant neoliberal economic reform (1984-1999), and the period following these reforms (1999 onwards). While CAFCA were marginalised by a climate of ideological closure imposed by the influence of neoliberal economic ideas and of its commitment to globalisation, a key reason for CAFCA's survival through this period is that it was also marginalised in the earlier Keynesian period, which meant that its original independence became a strength. Not being subject to the immediate political fashions also allowed CAFCA to play 'the long game' and to gain respect for maintaining a consistent position.

3. Nomenclatures

For a long running organisation like CAFCA it is not surprising that a number of relevant organisations and institutions changed their identity over time. Indeed, the Campaign Against Foreign Control in New Zealand (CAFCINZ) changed its name to CAFCA in 1986.

The respect for CAFCA's voice on overseas ownership issues is largely based on CAFCA's expertise in obtaining and analysing information from the Overseas Investment Office (OIO). The OIO was established, as the Overseas Investment Commission (OIC), under the Overseas Investment Act 1973, and was tasked with the oversight of applications by foreigners to invest in New Zealand. In 2005 the government abolished the OIC and moved its functions to the OIO, to be run as a unit of Land Information New Zealand (LINZ).

For the sake of clarity I refer to CAFCA/CAFCINZ or OIO/OIC with the name most appropriate to the time period under discussion.

In the following text I have adopted the practice of referring to Murray Horton, Bill Rosenberg, Wolfgang (Wolfie) Rosenberg and Owen Wilkes by their first names as they are widely known by these names in New Zealand activist circles. It also helps to distinguish between Bill and his father Wolfgang. All APA references utilise surnames.

While the vast majority of interviews were conducted as 'on the record', I also gave participants the option of signaling any comments that were not for attribution. These instances have been cited as 'author interview'.

4. Chapter Structure

In Chapter 2 I will introduce the relevant literature on globalisation and civil society.

The literature on civil society can be categorised into two broad perspectives, with no simple division between them (Mercer, 2002). One looks back to Alexis de Tocqueville's (1835) classic study of early American democracy, whereas another traces its origins to the Italian Marxist, Antonio Gramsci. I will examine both the Neo-Tocquevillian and the Neo-Gramscian approaches to civil society. While the latter is more appropriate for analysing the impact of a nationally focused CSO, it is also necessary to discuss the Neo-Tocquevillian literature given its significant influence. As the Neo-Tocquevillians warn of the dangers of civil society becoming politicised or polarised, and thus place great emphasis on the value of, for example, bowling clubs and singing societies, this also helps to explain why the literature has paid less attention to the role of political CSOs in civil society. Little in the contemporary literature acknowledges the role of political CSOs, particularly in relation to FDI and its impacts.

This is in a context in which the number of NGOs has been growing around the world (Clarke, 1998a; Hulme & Edwards, 1997, p. 4). Minkoff (2001) highlights the growth of a national sector of formal organisations committed to social change since the 1960s, in which interest groups and advocacy organisations have become "increasingly common, and sometimes even powerful, actors on the political stage". Minkoff and Jackie Smith (2001) argue that the status or presence of national organisations that advocate for political change are minimised by most current conceptions of civil society. I seek to utilise this important insight by using CAFCA as a case study to demonstrate the potential lacuna in the literature.

In Chapter 3 I will outline my research approach and methodology.

While I characterise CAFCA as a national organisation, it retains strong ties to its Christchurch base. Historically a number of significant national political organisations in New Zealand have grown out of Christchurch and an analysis of CAFCA will offer new insights into how and why this radical political tradition operates. I will also briefly examine the factors which may underlie a distinct intellectual tradition in Christchurch, most notably signposted by the long history of left wing publishing in the city. CAFCA's *Foreign Control Watchdog* is the last of these publications still in print. This leads to questions as to whether CAFCA could have emerged anywhere else in New Zealand, and whether the factors that assisted the birth of CAFCA in Christchurch in the 1970s are still relevant today.

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In this chapter, I also lay out the research questions that have structured this thesis. It is helpful to state them briefly here;

Major Research Questions

Did CAFCA make a discernible contribution to political debate/public sphere in New Zealand in the period from 1975 to the present? If so, how? Did this contribution vary according to changes in the structure of New Zealand political economy?

Does CAFCA demonstrate how a civil society organisation can play a political role in civil society, particularly in an environment that is hostile to its aims? If so, how?

Minor Research Questions

Did the CAFCA magazine ‘Foreign Control Watchdog’, published from 1975 onwards, make a discernible contribution to political debate/public sphere in New Zealand? If so, how?

How influential was CAFCA’s satirical “Roger Award” for the “worst transnational corporation operating in Aotearoa”, and how does this campaign show how a civil society organisation can play a political role in civil society?

In Chapter 4, ‘The life and times of CAFCA’ I will explain how CAFCA emerged from the New Left social movements of the late 1960s and early 1970s, as a group of peace movement activists opposed to American military bases in New Zealand became more interested in economic questions. I will also trace the origin of CAFCA’s ideas about economic management, beginning with New Zealand’s early tariff measures in the 19th century, through to the system of import licencing introduced by the First Labour Government in the 1930s as a means of developing local industry. This Keynesian approach to economic management was promoted in New Zealand by the economist William Ball (Bill) Sutch, who advocated for New Zealand to adopt an independent economic path and warned of the dangers of allowing multinational corporations greater control of the economy. At the time of CAFCA’s birth in 1974, a version of this Keynesian approach to the economy was still mainstream thinking, with Wolfgang Rosenberg, a prominent advocate in his position as Reader in Economics at the University of Canterbury.

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Along with introducing national political CSOs in a New Zealand context I will also explain how CAFCA fits into Christchurch's radical political tradition and its intellectual aspects.

This chapter will also introduce the case study of Comalco, New Zealand's only aluminium producer and the focus of major debates on the benefits and risks of foreign direct investment. The smelter was a key target of CAFCA's founding activity, 'The Resistance Ride', and CAFCA have remained a vocal opponent of the smelter ever since, regarding it as the textbook example of corporate welfare in New Zealand. I will also touch on the debates concerning the role of two influential public servants in regards to the smelter project, Bill Sutch and Jack Lewin, and the relevance of a strong letter of support Lewin sent CAFCA in 1974.

An examination of the reasons why CAFCA has survived as an organisation for over 45 years will be the focus of Chapter 5. While the determination, dedication and specific skills of CAFCA's key activists are a key strength, this can also become a weakness if it leads to an organisation being overly reliant on the work of individuals, as well as having implications for the nature of leadership. I will also offer an analysis of CAFCA's visibility in the media and ask how CAFCA survived as an organisation despite the growing influence of neoliberalism and related ideas of 'globalisation'.

Chapter 5 will outline CAFCA's contributions to the public sphere in New Zealand. A key focus will be CAFCA's five year campaign to encourage greater openness and transparency concerning the decisions of the Overseas Investment Commission (OIC), and the impact of the release of this information, as well as CAFCA's analysis of this information, on public and academic debates. I will outline CAFCA's lobbying efforts, most notably its calls to strengthen the Overseas Investment Act, and highlight instances where CAFCA has provided the public service with information they could not get elsewhere. This has led to CAFCA being consulted on proposed legislation by government departments such as Treasury, despite CAFCA's radical politics. It is notable that CAFCA's focus on improving the definition of good character in the Act and the need for a stronger national interest test are to be partly implemented by the Overseas Investment Act expected to be passed in 2021.

I will also examine in Chapter 5 the contribution CAFCA have made to debates in New Zealand concerning land sales to foreigners, the local impact of transnational corporations and the downsides of privatisation. I also examine the influence of CAFCA in the academic realm, in particular noting the contribution made by CAFCA to debates concerning news media ownership and foreign investment in New Zealand.

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In attempting to assess the influence of CAFCA on the New Zealand public sphere I have found it helpful to borrow a classic conception of power from the political science literature, first developed by Robert Dahl (1957): That conception is reduced to the pithy statement “A has power over B to the extent that he can get B to do something that B would not otherwise do”. In attempting to identify the “primitive notion” Dahl suggests the concepts of power, influence and control can be used somewhat interchangeably. I will return to this conception of influence when considering the case studies, where I will use it as a qualitative, rather than quantitative, measure.

While an assessment of contribution will be more straightforward and obvious for a group that is widely recognised and of a large size, one of the factors that makes CAFCA interesting is that despite its small size it has still made a very visible contribution. Its work is presented in a series of case studies that demonstrate how ideas and information are introduced and transferred through civil society. In this regard this study seeks to assist in the assessment of similar groups that on first glance may not seem significant. The case of CAFCA also demonstrates how a nationally focused CSO can have an impact as a resource for other civil society actors as a “journal of record”.

Since the mid-1980s the Official Information Act has acted as a key tool in CAFCA’s armoury. CAFCA’s systematic and persistent use of the Act was a crucial lever in forcing the Overseas Investment Office to make more information available to the public. It was also the lever that allowed CAFCA to obtain historical files from the New Zealand Security Intelligence Service (SIS) about CAFCA – after a 24 year long campaign. I will suggest that in pushing government agencies to release information relating to national security and foreign investment, CAFCA played a role in extending the reach and operation of the Official Information Act to the benefit of all of civil society.

In Chapter 7 I will look at the high profile 1977 dispute between the New Zealand Government and Comalco, the owners of the Tiwai Point aluminium smelter over the price the company paid for electricity. I will examine the impact of CAFCA’s release of internal company documents concerning these negotiations in 1980, along with new evidence sourced from WikiLeaks to offer new insight into these events. I will argue that while CAFCA did not make the same level of impact on the Comalco issue as they have done elsewhere, they played an essential role as a journal of record for other participants in the debate.

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In Chapter 8 I will examine the influence of the Roger Award, a key campaign for CAFCA and associated groups. This satirical ‘award ‘for the worst transnational corporation operating in New Zealand aimed to highlight the negative social, environmental and economic consequences of corporations on civil society.

In the concluding Chapter 9 I will summarise the main findings of the thesis and discuss the implications for the literature. In particular I will highlight CAFCA’s most important contribution to political debate, acting as a perennial journal of record, and discuss how this role can be undertaken and sustained by CSOs. I also pose the question as to the ‘success’ or efficacy of the group, utilising a very interesting and incisive contribution Bill Rosenberg contributed to an internal CAFCA ‘strategy’ meeting in 1995. My suggestions for future research centre on the left wing intellectual currents of Christchurch and the potential reassessment of the role of the state in the economy in the wake of the Covid-19 pandemic.

I now turn, in Chapter 2, to an examination of the relevant literature on civil society and globalisation. I hope to show that that consideration of a national political CSO, sceptical of globalisation raises some interesting points on matters of theory, and allows me to suggest lacuna in the literature may exist.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

5. Introduction

In this chapter I offer an overview of conceptions of “civil society” and “globalisation” and seek to explain why the treatment of national political CSOs may be a lacuna in analysis. Both conceptions are highly contested in the literature. While I will adopt a Neo-Gramscian perspective of civil society, it is also helpful to discuss Neo-Tocquevillian perspectives as they suggest a normative component that helps to explain contemporary reluctance to acknowledge the role played by political CSOs. I will also introduce the Washington Consensus and explain how the growing international influence of neoliberal economic models and their associated notions of globalisation influenced debates over the scope of state action. I will also address the argument that this image of globalisation exaggerates the extent of globalisation in reality. This argument implies that there remains more space for nationally focused economic strategies than is commonly supposed.

In considering relevant literature, it quickly becomes apparent that much analysis fails to address the form and role taken by political CSOs such as CAFCA. Indeed, this reluctance to acknowledge the role of political CSOs appears to be especially the case in regards to political CSOs with a national focus. For Clarke (1998a) actions by non-governmental organisations (NGOs) are:

“intrinsically political and the associational revolution triggered by the proliferation of NGOs suggests a fertile research agenda....Why are NGOs proliferating? What are the ideological bases of NGO action? How, and to what extent do NGOs intervene in politics?” (Clarke, 1998a)

Yet Clarke finds many studies of NGOs have not addressed their political roles and this has led to an “inadequate, explicitly normative interpretation of NGO ideology”. This implies the political role and impact of CSOs are likely to be underestimated in the literature. In contrast, for Edwards (2020, p. 13) political CSOs can act as a “crucial counterweight to state and corporate power and an essential pillar of promoting transparency, accountability, and other aspects of democratic governance”.

Smith (2001) and Minkoff (2001) highlight how national organisations seeking political change are given scant attention in most current models of civil society. While transnational versions of political associations are seen as the main indicators of a growing “global civil society”, the contribution of political CSOs to civil society at the national level is often ignored (J. Smith,

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2001, p. 194). This lacuna might downplay some significant examples of success. John Erhenberg (2017, p. 285), for example, attributes the achievements of the American Civil Rights Movement to its focus on using national opinion and national institutions to break entrenched local power.

However, by their nature, CSOs may be more likely to achieve smaller amounts of influence. In an article titled ‘Mission Impossible?’, Peter Thompson (2020) assesses the advocacy of the Campaign for Better Broadcasting (CBB) to improve the quality and scope of public broadcasting in New Zealand. In 2017 CBB released a previously confidential Radio New Zealand (RNZ) report as part of a parliamentary submission (Cooke, 2017). This report included candid staff comments on the impact of internal restructuring and budget cuts. The leak provoked a “furious” response from the RNZ Chair, Richard Griffin, and helped to highlight a bizarre scenario where the board chair of a public service broadcaster was opposing calls from public interest groups for increases in RNZ funding (Thompson, 2020). Thompson (2020) reports CBB influenced the decision of the Commerce Commission to decline a proposed merger between the two major newspaper groups in New Zealand, as evidenced by the multiple citations of CBB’s work in the Commission’s final report. These are typical of the kinds of interventions undertaken by national CSOs, yet examples of such ‘activist interventions’, as outlined by Thompson, are not well represented in the literature.

In this study of CAFCA, I highlight this lacuna in the literature, providing some insights into how the role of similar political civil society organisations can be assessed, and how assessments can be made as to the impact of such organisations. This analysis has implications for accounts of civil society and for descriptions of the relations of civil society with the market. It suggests that if the impact of national CSOs on civil society can be better understood, then, first, accounts of civil society that perpetuate the invisibility of national political CSOs will be shown to be incomplete, and, second, in some cases, misleading in their inadequacy. A more rounded understanding of CSOs, which acknowledges fully their political role will also permit a better understanding of the effectiveness of political civil society organisations.

This view has analytical implications, too. I will argue that dominant Neo-Tocquevillian accounts of civil society fail to explain as much as it might first appear, as they expect civil society to do too much (Fried, 2002), while paying inadequate attention to the political context in which civil society operates. A normative preference for bridging social capital leads the Neo-Tocquevillians to downplay and in some cases outright ignore political associations and social movements from the concept of civil society, thereby also excluding such organisations to be the

subject of explanation, and the potential for an oppositional or conflictive character of civil society. Due to these deficiencies, the lacuna in the literature could be wider, and even suggests there may be multiple gaps.

6. Civil Society and Globalisation: Contested Concepts

The Treaty of Westphalia of 1648 established the unitary nation state as the governing unit of the international system, granting each state legal equity and exclusive sovereignty within their own borders (Ehrenberg, 2017). From the mid-1970s the assumptions behind this system began to be challenged as part of a growing analysis of ‘globalisation’.

Ideas about civil society and globalisation returned to the centre of intellectual and political debate in the 1980s, gaining momentum with the fall of the Berlin Wall and the earlier opening to the world of the Chinese economy. As the Cold War came to a close, US political theorist Francis Fukuyama (1989) claimed that the ultimate triumph of liberal economic and political structures and the free market throughout the globe represented the “end of history”. While both civil society and globalisation have become popular terms, their meanings remain highly contested.

For some, we now live in a ‘globalised’ era in which national economies are reaching an unprecedented level of integration into a ‘global economy’, particularly in relation to trade and financial flows. It is often assumed this integration is gathering pace, while some claim such integration is ‘inevitable’ (Ohmae, 2005)². Some have claimed this transformation will ultimately create a world where borders are meaningless in economic terms, with “no national products or technologies, no national corporations, no national industries...no national economies, at least as we understand the concept. All that will remain rooted in national borders are the people who comprise a nation.” (Reich, 1992, p. 3). Kenichi Ohmae (2005) offered a similar vision of a “borderless world”. Globalisation is often the catch-all used to describe how finance, physical capital and even labour now have greater mobility across the entire world. Technological advances have made it easier and quicker to complete international transactions (IMF, 2000). For Easton (2007 p. xi-xii), “globalisation - or more precisely, the falling cost of distance (often coupled with economies of scale) has been one of the great forces in history, largely unstoppable but to some extent governable.”

² Kelsey (2002, p. 60) reports Reich argued globalisation was inevitable at a New Zealand Labour Party seminar in mid-1998.

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It is assumed a global market now exists, or is in the process of emerging, for products and factors (P. Q. Hirst et al., 2009, p. 2; Wade, 1996). While there may be different roads to globalisation, with some room for manoeuvre, globalisation is, in this view, ultimately inevitable, with “no going back to insulated, autonomous, abstractly sovereign states able to craft their own national models according to wholly domestic conceptions of social justice, natural hierarchies, corporatist social pacts, eternal values, or whatever.” (Soederberg et al., 2005, p. 3). In a borderless world, it is claimed that strong powerful central governments will be a thing of the past. Governments who attempt to hold on to “lingering delusions of this power...will appear increasingly ridiculous[, as]... the more they try to exert pressure on the no-longer-working pedals of power, the more pathetic and impotent they will appear” (Ohmae, 2005, pp. 193–194). Widespread acceptance of these ideas has contributed to the political marginalisation of groups such as CAFCA who defend the right of citizens to have a say on the structure of national economies and advocate for greater use of domestic strategies of economic management. Such views are often derided.

Some accounts of globalisation include an expectation that all industrial countries will tend towards producing and organising economic life in similar ways. This is based on neo classical theories of competition and trade, which predict that trade, interest rates and the standard of living will ultimately converge to similar levels across the world. Where they do not converge, the theory suggests, this is due to non-market forces such as the state or powerful interests interfering with the market. This vision underpins current debates on trade policy among economically advanced countries (Berger, 1996; Boyer, 1996) and provides a rationale for establishing common market rules and structures. In a way, the convergence hypothesis is a strong version of the prediction that what happens in other countries will have an increasing influence on a domestic economy.

The globalisation debate was also influenced by changes in economic thinking, where previously dominant Keynesian ideas came to be questioned in the wake of the breakdown of the Bretton Woods system of fixed-rate currencies in the early 1970s (Islam & Chowdhury, 2000, p. 215). Many countries faced a combination of high inflation and high unemployment, to the consternation of governments throughout the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). Within the economics profession there was something of an intellectual crisis, and this tipped the balance in many departments towards Milton Friedman and the Chicago School of economics (Harris, 1999; B. Jesson, 1999a, p. 117). The rise of monetarist policies through the 1980s, along with fiscal retrenchment in traditional social democracies and

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speculative attacks on national currencies, has encouraged supporters of the globalist orthodoxy to proclaim the kings of nations can now only act with the sanction of their new overlord, the global economy (Weiss, 1997). As the state appeared to retreat, it was assumed some of the functions of the state would be ‘restored’ to civil society. This is an often under-stated potential corollary of “monetarist” deregulation. The idea that a post-Keynesian deregulation at the “centre” might lead to an diffused empowerment of civil society is important, particularly for an understanding of the nature and role of NGOs.

A strong civil society was thought to be a cornerstone of democracy, “good governance” and the achievement of social and political goals (M. Edwards, 2011). This sense of optimism carried through into the 2000s dovetailing with so called “third way” politics. The call to strengthen civil society led to growth in the number and funding for development NGOs, who were often presented as alternative service providers to the state (M. Edwards, 2011). This led to some NGOs to worry that ‘support for civil society’ meant ‘privatisation by stealth’, signifying the use of voluntary associations as a smokescreen for state retrenchment and corporate interests (M. Edwards, 2009, p. 16). Hulme & Edwards (1997) describe how development policy and aid transfers between 1982 and 1997 came to be dominated by a ‘New Policy Agenda’, driven by beliefs organised around the twin poles of neo-liberal economics and liberal democratic theory. These calls to strengthen civil society were based on a particular vision of civil society as service provider and social glue, and chose to ignore or minimise the long history of the involvement and influence of civil society organisations in politics. This was based on two ideas – a strong civil society should be made up of organisations that seek to bridge social and political divisions, and an assumption that harmony is the natural or normal state of civil society. This attempt to depoliticise civil society may have represented an attempt to marginalise outwardly political civil society organisations like CAFCA. Yet, for example, the wide variety of civil society organisations that joined together to oppose the agenda of the World Trade Organisation at the ‘Battle of Seattle’ in 1999 demonstrated the political influence of civil society could not be easily discounted.

By 2000, there were signs that the high level of interest and support for the idea of civil society was losing its shine. While ideas about civil society have grown in popularity amongst politicians and policy makers since the late 1980s, “scholarly support has fallen away, or at least given way to rising suspicion and critical questioning.” (M. Edwards, 2011). Similarly, the certainty surrounding globalisation also came under increasing critical scrutiny, as I will discuss below.

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As noted above, the meanings of both ‘civil society’ and ‘globalisation’ are highly contested - consistent and agreed upon definitions remain elusive. For John Grimond (2001) of *The Economist*, civil society is a “woolly expression for woolly minded people”, whereas for Susan Strange (1995), globalisation is “a term used by a lot of woolly thinkers who lump together all sorts of superficially converging trends...and call it all globalisation without trying to distinguish what is important from what is trivial, either in causes or consequences”. Michael Foley & Bob Edwards (1996) suggest that at times the concept of civil society “seems to take on the property of a gas, expanding or contracting to fit the analytic space afforded it by each historical or socio-political setting”. Despite what evidence one might present, even on the basis of looking at the structure, functions and ideology of a single organisation, different conclusions could be reached on the basis of a lack of agreement as to what civil society is, and if one was allowed to extend the gas analogy, its viscosity or resistance to movement. Given that Hirst, Thompson & Bromley (2009, p. 4) have noted the term globalisation has an “almost infinite capacity to inflate – so that more and more aspects of the modern condition are increasingly drawn under its conceptual umbrella”, the gas analogy could well be applied to notions of globalisation too.

The conceptual confusions may also mask normative political agendas. For example, organisations such as the libertarian Cato Institute offer their own rather restricted and politically loaded view of ‘restoring civil society’ as “fundamentally reducing the role of politics in society by expanding free markets and individual liberty” (cited in M. Edwards, 2009, p. 2), as civil society is “based on voluntarism and predicated on giving the widest possible latitude to the individual so that he [sic] has sovereignty over his [sic] own life” (Crane, 1993). Similar calls to ‘depoliticise’ civil society are often made by market friendly proponents, but it remains to be seen whether their version of civil society would be a politics free paradise, or would make it more likely certain voices are heard louder than others in open contestation. As Michael Edwards (2009) notes, the use of the term civil society by the Cato Institute is in direct contrast to those on the political left who consider it as the seedbed for radical social movements. As an example of the latter, Edwards highlights the views of the Advocacy Institute who declare civil society the “best way forward for politics in the post-Cold war world”, “a society that protects those who organize to challenge power” and “the single most viable alternative to the authoritarian state and tyrannical market.”(p. 2). Edwards & Foley (2001, p. 2) suggest contemporary writers use the notion less as an analytical tool, more as a normative and polemical one, posing ‘civil society’ as an alternative to the existing political and economic order. This includes conceptions of “society against the state” as was influential in Poland and Latin America during the 1970s to

the conception of civil society as a sphere of social autonomy and democratisation “from below” among the German Greens and the French “Second Left”. Yet as Ehrenberg (2017, p. 226) reminds us, CSOs “still operate in a world of states, they are effective to the extent that they can affect the behaviour of states, and their influence depends on the degree to which they understand the importance of politics”. The intense hostility to the state that characterised conceptions of civil society in the dying days of the Eastern European communist regimes, ultimately aided the restoration of capitalism rather than a strong and vibrant civil society (Ehrenberg, 2017).

Similar normative agendas are also present in the globalisation debate. Weiss notes that while participants may disagree over the meaning and extent of globalisation, most are united in the view that globalisation restricts state power. She notes that in many cases “definitions of globalization presuppose in a somewhat circular manner the very outcome (of state retreat) that demands empirical investigation” (Weiss, 2000). In their normative senses, it could even be said that at times the literature reflects a tendency to use the notions of globalisation and civil society interchangeably. Both notions include an implicit view of the state, and some writers are clearer than others as to the type of state that is portrayed. Yet as both ‘globalisation’ and ‘civil society’ remain enduring concepts in social science and political economy, one needs to aim for greater clarity, not by demanding definitional rigidity, but by attempting to draw out strands from the woolly fibres.

I will return to the claims made on behalf of globalisation later, and offer an explanation as to why the views of the ‘globalists’ became so prominent, once I have identified key strands in the civil society debate.

7. Perspectives on Civil Society

From classical thought to the writings of Thomas Hobbs in the 17th century, civil society and the state were seen as indistinguishable. In the wake of the French and the American Revolutions, resulting in ructions in the ruling order and the rise of the market economy, a new conception of civil society emerged. Civil society became a description for the voluntary associations that sought to defend individual rights and freedoms from unwarranted intrusions by the state (M. Edwards, 2020, p. 5). Edwards notes an assumption that such associations were committed to similar ideals, and that civil society functioned as a self-regulating universe that needed to be protected from the state in order for it to retain its role in resisting despotism (op. cit.). The most famous outline of such a conception of civil society is found in Alexis de Tocqueville, in his

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influential work ‘Democracy in America’ (1835). For Tocqueville, equity and democracy represented both a promise and a threat (Ehrenberg, 2002, p. 60, 2017). He saw secondary associations as playing a role to protect the locally based freedom of those with “great wealth, influence and strength”, and his respect for the way they shaped American democracy was heavily influenced by an aristocratic suspicion of the levelling state (Ehrenberg, 2002, p. 57). Tocqueville’s emphasis on the need for local centres of power to temper the universalising impetus of democratic politics and the modern state is evident in modern communitarian and Neo-Tocquevillian thinking (Ehrenberg, 2002). In the 1980s, anti-communist intellectuals in Eastern Europe called for a “revolt of civil society against the state” (Ehrenberg, 2017). American academic Robert Putnam (1995, 2000) looked back to Tocqueville to celebrate associational life and its effects, and argued such life was in decline in the USA, Italy and elsewhere, helping to generate a new debate on ‘social capital’. The ‘Neo-Tocquevillian’ tradition is “particularly strong in the USA, where it dovetails naturally with pre-existing traditions of self-governance, suspicions about the state, and concerns about public disengagement from politics and civic life” (M. Edwards, 2020, pp. 5–6).

The Neo-Tocquevillians emphasise how a vigorous civil society can contribute and maintain democracy. For many Neo-Tocquevillians, civil society is a good and therefore they often conceptualise civil society organisations as good things. They also stress the positive role played by the ilk of bowling clubs, choral groups and bird-watching societies, and warn of the dangers of civil society becoming polarized or politicised. Those who adopt a Neo-Tocquevillian account of civil society often believe a strong civil society is made up of organizations that bridge social and political cleavages (Barber, 2003; Fukuyama, 1999; R. D. Putnam, 1995). This can lead to reluctance to acknowledge the role played by CSOs as important institutional vehicles in shaping political discourse and mobilizing collective interests (Clarke, 1998a). Nor does it allow for the potential for an oppositional or conflictive character of civil society (Foley & Edwards, 1996; Forman, 2002), as it appears to assume that harmony is the natural or normal state of civil society (Forman, 2002, p. 256). Such accounts often have an unstated theme of restoration, with an imagery that could be likened to the reassurance that was meant to be felt across England when Charles II took the throne in 1660 and the traditional sources of power and authority were seen to be back in their rightful place. In a similar fashion, supporters of neoliberal globalisation look to restore the functioning of the free market from state interventions such as Keynesianism. In this way, many Neo-Tocquevillian accounts of civil society look to restore both civil society

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and the market to a supposed natural state. Whether the market or civil society have such a natural state is another question entirely.

A second perspective traces its origins to the Italian Marxist Antonio Gramsci, and sees civil society as a contested space, where civil society organisations reflect struggles within wider society.

“Neo-Tocquevillian liberals and conservative proponents of civil society tend to ignore or actively exclude from consideration those sorts of organizations and activities that are associated with advocacy and political action, considering them divisive or beside the point.” This is contrasted with the “opponentist conception of civil society developed in Eastern Europe and Latin America and the European inspired conceptions associated with the “new pluralism (Keane, 1988), that puts particular stress on the representative, contestatory, or political function of civil society” (B. Edwards & Foley, 2001, p. 6).

Adherents of a ‘Neo-Gramscian’ approach to civil society include Cohen & Arato (1992), Foley & Edwards (1996), Edwards, Foley & Diani (2001), Mercer (2002), Gill (2008, 2012) and Bebbington, Hickey and Mitlin (2008). Scholte (2001) observes that “much contemporary discussion identifies civil society as a site of disruption and dissent.” Neo-Gramscians see the public sphere as a critical part of civil society, as an arena where individuals and groups can come together to discuss matters of mutual interest, and where possible reach shared conclusions. The public sphere is “a realm of our social life in which something approaching public opinion can be formed” (Habermas, 1974). Hence, political CSOs and social movements have a critical role in promoting discourse and debate.

In contrast to the emphasis of Putnam and the Neo-Tocquevillians on the constrained role of bowling clubs and singing societies, Foley & Edwards (1996) and Cohen and Arato (1992) see social movements as the most dynamic element with the most positive potential for modern civil societies. Such movements can build civic action, civic skills and encourage cooperation among members by mobilising people and creating debate. For Scholte (2001), an active political orientation is key to his conception of civil society, and he goes further by excluding the baseball clubs on the grounds they do not attempt to shape policies, norms and structures of society. Foley & Edwards (1996, p. 3) argue that not only could decidedly political associations play the role attributed to the baseball clubs by the Neo-Tocquevillians, it is possible decidedly political associations may be even more effective in this role. They question how organisations like bowling clubs could possibly shape political participation and ‘civic engagement’ unless they are engaged in political issues and actively representing compelling social interests. A similar point is made by Michael Edwards (2020, p. 98) and Benjamin Barber (2003, p. 253). Jenny Onyx

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and Garth Norwland-Freeman (2017) offer a useful comprehensive survey of the “third sector”/civil society in Australia and New Zealand, which does not neglect the protest and advocacy roles of CSOs. They stress the contribution made by political activists, noting they represent “another category of volunteer, that is rarely discussed or even identified, yet which may be even more important, not only to the development of social capital but to the capacity of civil society to produce social change”.

Given that many political CSOs would regard ‘civic engagement’ on the issues that concern them as a key aim, Putnam is effectively arguing that such organisations are ineffective, which in itself is a strong claim. As Smith (2001) highlights, the tendency of the Neo-Tocquevillians to exclude or downplay political CSOs and social movements from the concept of civil society may be excluding significant causal variables in civil societies. For Foley & Edwards (1996, p. 3) social movements are often “the central bearers of democratizing pressures within Western democracies”. This is part of the alternative perspective on civil society that maintains that civil society organisations reflect struggles within wider society, and sees civil society as a contested space, as part of a public ‘sphere’.

The Neo-Gramscian perspective has its origins in Hegel’s conception of civil society. While Hegel included the economy as part of civil society, he placed focus on the conflicts and inequities that raged between political and economic interests in civil society and maintained the state had a role to ensure the ‘civil’ remained (M. Edwards, 2020, p. 6). Hegel led Karl Marx to take a negative view of civil society, understood as a vehicle for furthering the interests of the ruling class under capitalism. The most important figure for the development of the idea of civil society as a contested space was the Italian Marxist Antonio Gramsci, who reinterpreted Hegel to provide a critique of Marx and Engels. In doing so, Gramsci can be said to reflect a modern renewal of the left radical critique of civil society (Cohen & Arato, 1992), and “may be single-handedly responsible for the revival of the term civil society in the post-World War II period” (Hodgkinson & Foley, 2003, p. xix)

For Gramsci, civil society is an arena in which class hegemony forges consent, where civil society could be the source of rebellion as well as the source of cultural and economic hegemony. This could be expressed through families, schools, universities, unions and voluntary associations, as these institutions help shape the political dispositions of citizens. This modern perspective was also influenced by the work of the American philosopher John Dewey, who highlighted the importance of political life based on public deliberation on the big questions of the day, and called on any threats to this public sphere, such as commercialisation of the media,

to be strongly resisted (Hodgkinson & Foley, 2003, p. xiv; M. Edwards, 2020, p. 7). The theory of the public sphere was further developed by Jurgen Habermas (1974). Civil society is the “arena for argument and deliberation, as well as for association and institutional collaboration” (M. Edwards, 2020, p. 67) “Independent public deliberation is feasible only through channels that are not completely captured by states or markets, so the condition of associational life and the regulatory frameworks imposed by government are always important factors.” (M. Edwards, 2020, pp. 68–69). This allows a political role for civil society not based on the conquest of power, but in the politics of influence thorough democratic associations and “unconstrained discussion” in the cultural public sphere (Cohen & Arato, 1992, p. x). It is the aim of this PhD to assess the influence of CAFCA on the New Zealand public sphere.

8. Why Is There a Lacuna in the Literature Concerning National Political CSOs?

There is a number of potential factors that help explain why there is a lacuna in the literature in relation to national political CSOs. These include normative considerations, linguistic considerations and definitional considerations. Many accounts of civil society, particularly those of the Neo-Tocquevillian stripe, seek to exclude certain associations from civil society based on a predefined set of normative criteria, based on their commitment to being voluntary, democratic, modern and ‘civil’ (M. Edwards, 2020, p. 2). Such accounts often emphasise the value of consensus and see conflict as a negative, which helps to explain why political CSOs have not been their focus of attention.

It is also worth paying attention to how words are used. One of the legacies of the civil society revivalists has been “a particular understanding of ‘civility’ as politeness, and the conflation of civil society with ‘consensus’, not debate or disagreement.” (M. Edwards, 2020, p. 74). To Edwards this is a distortion of the original meaning of civility, when civility “assumes that we will disagree, often profoundly, but calls on us to resolve our disagreements peacefully. Everything else, from street protest to satire – is welcome in the public sphere” (M. Edwards, 2020, p. 75).

Attenuating the word civil, rather than just using a term such as society or wider society, can also carry expectations of behaviour. While the Oxford English Dictionary defines civil as ‘of or relating to ordinary citizens’, civil can also be used as an adjective meaning ‘courteous and polite’. In a discourse where global economic actors such as the IMF and the World Bank

consult with selected representatives of ‘civil society’ during their respective forums, this raises a question as to whether there is such a thing as ‘uncivil society’ (Choudry, 2002) – that being the groups that seek a more transformational reform of the global market and its current institutions, and refuse to ‘play by the rules’ set by organisations they believe to have questionable legitimacy.

Foley and Edwards (1996) and Edwards (2020, p. 28) are right to argue that structural models of civil society are critically undermined when writers attempt to exclude from civil society groups that they disapprove of. If civil society is meant to play a role in promoting democracy, when civil society itself is limited to groups with “moderate” demands that are democratic in spirit themselves, such arguments start to look decidedly circular³.

The normative preference for bridging social capital leads the Neo-Tocquevillians to downplay and, in some cases, outright ignore political associations and social movements from the concept of civil society (Foley & Edwards, 1996; J. Smith, 2001). For some advocates of civil society, this relates to the concern with factionalism that informs elite and pluralist theories of state power (Held, 1989; Foley & Edwards, 1996; Minkoff, 2001). Social movements violate the notion that a strong civil society is made up of organisations that bridge social and political cleavages rather than reinforce them (Minkoff, 2001). The origins of this debate may go back to ancient Greece – where Aristotle (1948) argued Plato’s drive for unity in civil society could destroy the possibility of political association (Ehrenberg, 2017).

It is an irony that Tocqueville himself, while concerned with the negative pressures of factionalism and the dangers political associations posed to any regime, saw political associations as “the great free schools to which all citizens come to be taught the general theory of association” (de Tocqueville, 1835). In contrast to Putnam’s emphasis on the importance of depoliticised associations for democracy, Tocqueville saw political action and democratic institutions as requisites for other sorts of civic action⁴ (de Tocqueville, 1835; Foley & Edwards,

³ While such arguments are more common among Neo-Tocquevillians, Arato’s (1996) vision of civil society also emphasises ‘self-limiting’ politics on behalf of civil society actors, working with the “framework of the rule of law” and “making democratic compatible with the continuation of market oriented reform”. While there may be strong strategic reasons for NGOs to operate in a ‘self-limiting’ fashion in some contexts this does not entail the landscape of civil society should be normatively limited to its self-limiting versions. To be fair, Arato appears to acknowledge this when says the answer is not to minimise ‘fundamentalist’ or ‘anti-political’ civil society politics, but to create incentives for its self-limiting versions.

⁴ As Michael Walzer (2003, pp. 316–317) puts it “Only a democratic state can create a democratic civil society; only a democratic civil society can sustain a democratic state. The civility that makes democratic politics possible can only be learned in the associational networks; the roughly equal and widely dispersed capabilities that sustain the networks have to be fostered by the democratic state.”

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1996, p. 3; Fried, 2002, p. 38). Where political associations were forbidden, “civil associations will always be few, feebly conceived, and unskilfully managed and either will never form any vast designs or will fail in the execution of them” (de Tocqueville, 1835; Foley & Edwards, 1996). As a question of emphasis, it is also worth noting that Tocqueville’s discussion of associational life, while influential, only takes up 6 of the 700 pages included in Tocqueville’s famous volume (Fine, 2010; Fried, 2002). Tocqueville also highlighted how political associations can play a bridging role by drawing individuals out of their own circle. As Tocqueville understood, any account of civil society must provide an account of political associations and the context in which they operate.

Some civil society advocates claim national social movement organisations (SMOs) do not positively contribute to the development of social capital and thus should not be regarded as part of civil society (Minkoff, 2001, p. 187). These concerns relate to the structure of such organisations and the perceived commitment of individual members. While the favoured organisations are characterised by high member commitment and interaction with other members of the group, national SMOs are seen as centralised and bureaucratic with a high degree of distance between leaders and members (McCarthy & Zald, 1977). According to Putnam (1995), for the “vast majority” of members of such groups “the only act of membership consists in writing a cheque for dues or perhaps occasionally reading a newsletter....The bond between any two members of the Sierra Club is less than any two members of a gardening club and more like the bond between two Red Sox fans...while they root for the same team and they share some of the same interests, but they are unaware of each other’s existence...Their ties, in short, are to common symbols, common leaders, and perhaps common ideals, but not to one another” (op. cit.). Putnam, if asked, might question the contribution to civil society of CAFCA on similar grounds. While Putnam (2000, p. 153) acknowledges that social movements can create social capital by fostering new identities and extending social networks, he questions whether this applies to professionalised national social movement organisations like Greenpeace. Even those who claim to incorporate social movements as central actors in civil society, such as Cohen and Arato (1992), make a similar move, privileging grassroots participatory movements over those more reliant on national professionalised structures (Minkoff, 2001). There appears to be an element of definitional sophistry in Putnam denying that national SMOs can create social capital, and then defining social capital as more than symbolic ties, as “real ties to real people – that is, by social capital” (R. D. Putnam, 2000, p. 158). Portes (1998) highlights how Putnam’s search for an explanation often ends up by relabelling the original problem to be explained, where the

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elimination of exceptions reduces the logical space between cause and effect, “so that the final predictive statement is either a truism or circular.”

For Putnam (2000) the essence of social capital is face-to-face contact, not a mail-out. While he acknowledges the political importance of the new mass membership organisations, he relegates national SMOs as “tertiary” associations from the point of view of social connectedness.

Putnam’s characterisation of members of national SMOs is a touch simplistic. It appears that the most active gardeners and bowlers are being compared to the least active cheque scribbling members of national SMOs, and he appears to ignore how such memberships can coexist with and lead to greater involvement. The media profile of a large SMO is only the tip of the iceberg (Foley & Edwards, 1996; Minkoff, 2001). Research on social movements has demonstrated that national movements only emerge based on some degree of internal organisation and local mobilising structures (Minkoff, 2001). Without an element of self-organisation, national SMOs would not be able to mount the kinds of challenges to authorities that national SMOs are known for (Minkoff, 2001). At the very least, the existence of national SMOs provides trace evidence of denser networks, grassroots infrastructures and social capital (Minkoff, 2001). For example, groups such as CAFCA often call in volunteers from their membership to prepare mail-outs for the post office, and CAFCA volunteers often see such events as social situations. Putnam’s take on social connectedness is based on a very limited view of solidarity social relations (Minkoff, 2001). This would also imply the explanatory reach of Putnam can only ever explain social connectedness when based on the effects of direct contact with one’s own neighbours, friends and associates.

While Putnam, like de Tocqueville, emphasises face to face contact (Fried, 2002, p. 41), the latter also allowed for other types of social connections. While reading a movement newsletter is a low level membership activity for Putnam, de Tocqueville (1835) described how newspapers could provide a means to bring an association together, and to maintain such associations even if members are scattered over a wide extent, and “to converse each day without seeing each other, and to take steps in common without having met”. Minkoff (2001, p. 187) makes a similar point when she argues that mediated or abstract relations outside of face to face interaction can provide a basis for solidarity and collective identity, and this may represent an alternative form of social capital. Many national SMOs use their newsletters to encourage members to take action in support of movement goals, such as writing to government or taking part in protests and other actions. For example, in 2008 CAFCA emailed their members to promote a postcard that members and supporters could sign and send to Members of Parliament opposing the

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privatisation of publicly owned assets and infrastructure. CAFCA received a surge of orders for the postcards, ranging from the minimum of ten postcards to several thousand. After sending the postcards, members reported back to CAFCA that National MPs were asking who was behind the postcards, leading to the Deputy Prime Minister alleging (incorrectly) that it was an “orchestrated, covert third party campaign” run by opposition parties in breach of electoral finance laws⁵ (Horton, 2008b). After a high degree of media interest, CAFCA were more than happy to acknowledge they had produced the cards, and explained that the reason CAFCA’s name and contact details did not appear on the cards was that they were not acting as the sender – the whole point was to allow the person sending the card to personally endorse the message, and add their own comments, before sending to an MP or candidate. It is difficult to see how Putnam’s account of social capital would account such an example.

This example shows how Putnam’s limited account of the ways national SMOs can engage their members and his normative preference for face to face interactions leaves him with an account of social capital that fails to provide an adequate explanation for common civil society activities of social movement organisations and the potential social capital that could result. Whether national SMOs are or can be productive of social capital remains an open question (Minkoff, 2001). As Putnam (1995) admits, the rapid growth of national environmental groups, such as the Sierra Club and feminist groups like the National Council for Women could represent a serious counterargument to his thesis of a decline in associational life. Putnam should, perhaps, do more than just assume the impact of such organisations will always be “tertiary”. To be explicit, in highlighting the lacuna in the literature in regards to national political CSOs, and examining the influence of CAFCA as an example, this PhD aims to address the open question raised by Minkoff.

The study of national political CSOs is also likely to have been discouraged by the exaggerated claims made on behalf of globalisation, and the subsequent reinforcement of the idea that nationally based actors and institutions were on their way out. So part of the explanation why there is a lacuna in the literature also needs to consider how the ideas associated with the globalist orthodoxy became so dominant, a climate some have described as characterised by ideological closure. Yet if the world is not quite as global as the globalists suggest, then there remains a need to consider the role of nationally focussed political CSOs.

⁵ In a speech to the 2008 Post Primary Teachers Association Conference in Wellington, PPTA President Robin Duff (2008) encouraged members to fill in the postcards and reassured them it was not breaching the electoral finance laws.

9. The Washington Consensus, Globalisation and the Role of the Nation-State

While this thesis is focused on New Zealand, like Brian Roper (2005), I believe it is important to consider the extent to which the shift in New Zealand politics from Keynesianism to neoliberalism was propelled by international influences. This revival of ideas associated with neoclassical macroeconomics, and the ascendancy of conservative governments sympathetic to these ideas in the United States and the United Kingdom over the 1980s helped to establish what became known as the ‘Washington Consensus’ (Islam & Chowdhury, 2000, p. 7). This refers to a policy agenda of free markets, free trade, unfettered capital flows and minimal government intervention. The central idea of the Washington Consensus is a call for the reduction in the size of government, particularly regulation relating to the economy. While John Williamson (2009) initially coined the term in a more limited sense to describe a set of policy reforms most of official Washington thought would benefit Latin American countries, it later gained a wider purchase with most commentators using it as a synonym for policies described as ‘neoliberalism’ or ‘market fundamentalism’⁶. The similar policy prescriptions favoured at the time by the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF), and Washington location of their respective headquarters, helped to solidify the label. They were joined by the OECD, finance markets, credit rating agencies and the business media in using the Washington Consensus as a measure by which to judge not only the economic credentials of developing countries, but developed nations as well. It “became a formula that was applied regardless of time and place, structural condition, political circumstance, administrative competency, institutional sophistication or even cause of economic malaise” (Harris, 1999).

While the Washington Consensus began as a description of the policy preferences of the American political establishment, it became the basis of a claim there was an international consensus in favour of neoliberal economic policies. As Kelsey (1999, p. 32) notes, in one sense this claim was true, as neo-liberal economists enjoyed a virtual hegemony among economic commentators, policy-makers and business leaders from the 1980s to the mid-1990s. An obsession with the ‘economically correct’ served to freeze ideas, discouraged empirical testing of key assumptions and strengthened the resolve of those who claimed ‘there is no alternative’ (Kelsey, 1999).

⁶ An extension Williamson himself denied

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In such an environment, national reforming economic strategies appear caught in the headlights of the globalisation parade, with many assuming that such strategies are unfeasible in the face of the judgement and sanction of global markets (P. Q. Hirst et al., 2009, p. 2). Yet this raises the question as to how much globalisation there has been in reality. Hirst, Thompson & Bromley (2009), Wade (1996), Weiss (1997), Ehrenberg (2017) and Kelsey (1999) highlight how the image of globalisation, particularly in its stronger versions, is based on exaggeration and myth. Wade (1996) highlights how Norman Angell in 1911 and writers of the mid-nineteenth century looked forward “to a single, more or less standardized world where all governments would acknowledge the truths of political economy and liberalism carried throughout the globe by impersonal missionaries more powerful than those of Christianity or Islam had ever been; a world reshaped in the image of the bourgeoisie, perhaps even one from which, eventually, national differences would disappear” (Hobsbawm, 1975, pp. 65–66). This demonstrates that current internationalisation of the world economy is far from unprecedented –in fact the level of integration, in some respects, has only recently become as open and integrated as the world economy that existed between 1870 and 1913 (P. Q. Hirst et al., 2009, p. 3; Wade, 1996). Even finance markets in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries were more integrated than they were before and have been ever since, despite the significant improvements in communications (Wade, 1996, p. 75). While the world’s largest companies now have a greater global reach than they did prior to World War I (Roper, 2005), the crucial point from this historical perspective is that globalisation is not irresistible or irreversible, as the integrated world economy of the nineteenth century was dismantled in the years leading up to World War I, with trade integration only beginning to recover after World War II. The claim that globalisation is being driven by advances in technology can also be called into question, as the great advances in communications and transport technology between 1913 and 1960 did not cause economic integration, even though invention made integration more and more economically feasible (Wade, 1996, p. 87). As Wade notes, it is not enough for the recent globalisation literature to extrapolate from technological potential, while overlooking the extent to which social and political causes drive economic integration or its opposite.

Similarly, it remains to be seen whether the convergence hypothesis will ever come to pass. Despite claims the borderless world exists already (Ohmae, 2005), there are few signs the world economy is converging in any real sense. While the world economy is more integrated than it was in 1960, this trend slowed over the 1980s and 1990s (Wade, 1996; Weiss, 1997). Financial regulations, tax systems, accounting practices and corporate ownership rules continue to largely

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be determined on a national basis (Wade, 1996). There are only a few financial products that are sold in way that could resemble a highly integrated world market, such as currencies, bonds and futures, and even these are subject to some national differences (Weiss, 1997). There is no world stock market, and contrary to the convergence hypothesis, there are indications that between 1990 and 2002 the international correlation between stock market returns decreased, with many other studies showing a decrease in international financial integration since the 1980s (P. Q. Hirst et al., 2009, p. 171). Despite the predictions of worldwide convergence by the globalists, the evidence suggests trade and investment is becoming more geographically concentrated in intra-regional patterns (P. Q. Hirst et al., 2009, p. 3; Weiss, 1997, p. 11). Transactions involving Europe, Japan/East Asia and North America continue to dominate trade, investment and financial flows, and this is not expected to change soon, especially given recent shocks such as the Covid-19 pandemic. As predictions of worldwide economic convergence have not, and may not ever come to pass, this appears to be another exaggeration by the globalism's adherents. Boyer (1996) and Wade (1996) question the link made by the globalists between convergence and globalisation, and highlight the many ways in which internationalisation and globalisation are hardly complete.

Some advocates of the success of neoliberal globalization, such as Soederberg, Menz, & Cerny (2005) resist attempts to define globalisation "as a process that can be derived from particular economic data or trends", and instead highlight political decisions as the source of such trends. Yet this raises the question as to what evidence, assuming it existed, would be accepted by such advocates as evidence that globalisation was not happening, or not happening at the assumed speed and direction. Such approaches risk utilising a definition of globalisation that lacks content, and risk not adequately addressing economic evidence that does not fit their argument. In advocating 'different roads to globalization', perhaps Soederberg et. al (2005) give another insight into their attitude to empirical data when they suggest an emerging neoliberal consensus requires entrenching "a priori anticipated reactions that internalize neoliberalism in the way people frame political and economic issues." They also appear to ignore relevant aspects of the political context such as the growing political opposition and resistance to processes of economic integration and globalisation, and how these are reflected in the national politics of all industrial countries (Berger, 1996).

Even among those who agree that the phenomenon of globalisation has been highly exaggerated, there is disagreement as to the extent economic internationalisation has limited state capacity (Weiss, 1997, p. 16). Wade (1996) highlights how the nation state remains an important locus of

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accumulation and national actors and institutions still continue to play a dominant role in structuring economic space. While Hirst et. al.(2009) and Easton (2007) insist on the continuing importance of the nation state, they envisage a nation state with less scope than in the past to pursue independent commercial policies.

“Nation-states should no longer be seen as ‘governing’ powers, able to impose outcomes on all dimensions of policy within a given territory by their own authority, but as loci from which forms of governance can be proposed, legitimated and monitored. Nation-states are now simply one class of power and political agency in a complex system of power from world to local level, but they have a centrality because of their relationship to territory and population” (P. Q. Hirst et al., 2009, p. 239).

As Weiss points out, this places Hirst and Thompson’s position closer to that of the globalists.

According to [Hirst and Thompson’s]...interpretation of current tendencies, state power is being reduced and redefined on a broad scale, stripped to the basics, becoming even a shall of its former self, still the supreme source of legitimacy and delegator of authority, but exercising no real capacity over its economic domain” (Weiss, 1997, p. 17).

While Weiss believes Hirst and Thompson would reject the ‘weak state’ characterisation of their position, it is difficult to envisage the “kind of substantive powers the state would retain if it is no longer where the action is.” (Weiss, 1997, p. 17).

“The problem with the ‘powerlessness’ argument is not that it is wrong about the new constraints on government capacity to make and implement policy. Rather, it is the assumption that such constraints are absolute rather than relative, and that they represent ‘the end of state history’ rather than an evolving history of state adaptation to both external and internal challenges” (Weiss, 1997, p. 13)

For the globalists who predict the death of national economies, and/or highlight the decline in the power of states to direct national economies, Weiss highlights three weaknesses in their position. First, Globalists tend to exaggerate state powers in the past in order to highlight the feebleness of states in the present. In a similar fashion to the claims of Soederberg et al. quoted above, who claim there is no going back to insulated, autonomous sovereign states, supporters of free market reforms in New Zealand accuse their moderate critics of wanting to return to ‘Fortress New Zealand’. Such a ‘fortress’, if it ever existed, must have been rather porous, as the New Zealand economy has always highly subject to the whims of international commodity prices, even during its most regulated periods. As Bruce Jesson (1999a, p. 61) highlights, such claims are made alongside a ‘state of amnesia’ and nothing but contempt for the past. For the proponents of neoliberalism, New Zealand prior to 1984 was nothing but a state controlled and oppressive

economy and society. While the neoliberal reforms in New Zealand after 1984 represented an application of the Washington Consensus in one of the purest forms anywhere, Weiss (1997) highlights that the globalists also exaggerate the uniformity and the extent to which such policy programmes have been implemented elsewhere, giving Germany and Japan as examples of governments that did not follow neoliberal dictums to the letter. Haworth (1997) and Weiss (1997, p. 18) provide some useful examples of countries offering rhetorical support for international liberalisation, yet at the same time adopting seemingly contradictory policy at the domestic level.

Weiss highlights that political leaders in the English-speaking world have played a key role in encouraging the view that governments were helpless in the face of the global economy, as it provided a convenient excuse for the policies of retrenchment they wished to pursue. Even in the case where governments were facing similar pressures, this does not support a conclusion these pressures are due or largely due to ‘globalisation’, or that there is a uniformity of response to these pressures (Weiss, 1997, p. 16). So not only have the globalists exaggerated the extent of economic convergence – they have also exaggerated the extent of policy convergence due to globalisation. Pitting the image of an unstoppable global economy against the nation state leads to a false assumption of an either/or choice, when the global economy and the nation state have always depended on each other, even if their respective roles may vary from time to time (B. Jesson, 1999b, p. 342; Weiss, 2000). Exaggeration of globalisation may mask the true nature of the world economy.

10. Concluding thoughts on literature

So what is the nature of the current relationship between nation states and the global economy?

Wade and Hirst et al. (2009) argue the current world economy is more inter-national than global.

“In the bigger national economies, more than 80 percent of production is for domestic consumption and more than 80 percent of investment by domestic investors. Companies are rooted in national home bases with national regulatory regimes. Populations are much less mobile than are goods, finance or ideas. These points suggest more scope for government actions to boost the productivity of firms operating within their territory than is commonly thought...” (Wade, 1996)

Thinking forward to later analysis of CAFCA, this suggests that CAFCA has not been marginalised by globalisation as such, but by the claims in favour of globalisation itself, many of which can be shown to be exaggerated. Even Francis Fukuyama, the man who famously

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proclaimed the ideological victory of political and economic liberalism in 1989, believes globalisation is still superficial in many respects, and “the underlying truth is that the global economy is still limited” (Fukuyama, 1997). Berger (1996) and Weiss (1997) find little support for the claim that the internationalisation of economies reduces nation states to passivity and impotence. While Hirst et al. do believe internationalisation has created constraints on certain types of national economic strategy, they maintain that these claims have been exaggerated, which means that the extent to which national economic strategies may be constrained has also been exaggerated. They also highlight how evidence for more cautious arguments is used to bolster the strong version of the globalisation thesis, thereby confusing public discussion and policy making, and helping to reinforce the view that political actors can accomplish less than is actually possible in a global system (P. Q. Hirst et al., 2009, p. 17).

The image promoted by the globalists of a global economy set to rule over now impotent nation states is misleading, as it encourages a myth there is an either or choice. While there may be some variation in their respective roles of nation states and wider economies over time, this debate is as old as the earliest concepts of the nation, and may even precede it. In New Zealand it began as soon as the first Maori waka (canoes) reached our shores, and was heightened by British colonisation. For nearly 30 years, CAFCA have been notable participants in debates concerning New Zealand’s role in the international economy, drawing on and gaining inspiration from earlier intellectual traditions.

A number of other factors contributed to the political marginalisation of CAFCA. Perceptions of Keynesian policies being discredited, along with an increasing influence of neoliberal ideas, and later claims of an international consensus in favour of neoliberalism and the Washington Consensus, all contributed to place CAFCA’s ideas outside the dominant neoliberal political and economic paradigm. It is possible that this exclusion made CAFCA more important, particularly as other CSOs adapted their positions to a more neoliberal friendly stance, avoided economic issues or dwindled away. Yet CAFCA survived and continued to challenge the view that the state should have less involvement in the economy. A number of New Zealanders may have looked to CAFCA to help them answer the neoliberal challenge.

The demonstration of the political roles played by politically-minded CSOs helps to highlight how the existing literature, particularly that of a Neo-Tocquevillian stripe, is not able to offer an adequate framework in which such organisations can be assessed. The tendency of the Neo-Tocquevillians to exclude or downplay the role of political CSOs and social movements may be excluding significant causal variables in civil societies.

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Given the Neo-Tocquevillians apathy, and in some cases antipathy, towards political associations, it is ironic that Tocqueville himself used the example of a nationally focused political association to demonstrate the liberty of association for political purposes he found in 18th century America. In 1831, as a debate between supporters and opponents of free trade was in full swing.

“[A] private citizen of Massachusetts proposed to all the enemies of the tariff, by means of the public prints, to send delegates to Philadelphia in order to consult together upon the means which were most fitted to promote freedom of trade. This proposal circulated in a few days from Maine to New Orleans by the power of the printing-press: the opponents of the tariff adopted it with enthusiasm; meetings were formed on all sides, and delegates were named. On October 1, 1831, this assembly, which according to the American custom had taken the name of a Convention, met at Philadelphia; it consisted of more than two hundred members. Its debates were public, and they at once assumed a legislative character; the extent of the powers of Congress, the theories of free trade, and the different clauses of the tariff, were discussed in turn. At the end of ten days’ deliberation the Convention broke up, after having published an address to the American people...” (de Tocqueville, 1835)

What is remarkable about this passage is the description that Tocqueville offers of the role and activities of nationally focused political associations is readily identifiable with the activities of similar organisations across time and place, including our own.

As Clarke (1998a) identifies, the rapid growth in the numbers, range and scope of the CSO sector, along with an acknowledgement of the intrinsically political nature of NGO action has the potential to provide a fertile research agenda. As a nationally focused CSO that advocates for political change, an examination of the influence of CAFCA as an organisation will directly address the lacuna in the civil society literature identified by Smith and Minkoff, and their concern that similar groups are minimised by most current conceptions of civil society. Yet through the discussion above, I believe I have identified that the literature may also be underdeveloped in other important, related areas.

Chapter 3: Research Approach and Methodology

11. Research Approach

This study will be undertaken within a broad tradition of critical rationalism⁷, drawing inspiration from the critical philosophy of Immanuel Kant (1787) and Karl Marx (1967). I uphold an approximation theory of truth that accepts the fallibility of belief. While my approach is broadly materialist, I also acknowledge the influence of Kant's transcendental idealism, as outlined in the second edition of the *Critique of Pure Reason*, a position that was substantially less radical than the idealism of Hegel to which Marx responded, and the idealism of Croce to which Gramsci responded. While there may appear to be some tension between a neo-Kantian position and a commitment to realism, for Kant the objects of human cognition are transcendently ideal and empirically real, that there are 'things in themselves' but we may not know much about them.

Research Questions

Jackie Smith (2001) and Debra Minkoff (2001) highlight how national CSOs that advocate for political change are minimised by most current conceptions of civil society.

The tendency of the Neo-Tocquevillians to exclude or downplay political CSOs may be excluding significant causal variables from civil societies, and by doing so underestimating the role played by CSOs in shaping political discourse and mobilising collective interests. The assumption of Robert Putnam that the impact of such organisations is only 'tertiary' is found to be wanting, particularly as Putnam's account appears to be based a very limited view of the potential range of solidarity social relations. In attempting to exclude certain associations on the basis of normative criteria, or simply play favourites, Neo-Tocquevillian accounts of civil society weaken their explanatory value. Such accounts often emphasise the value of consensus and see conflict as a negative, which helps to explain why political CSOs have not been the focus of attention.

⁷ My reference to a broad tradition of critical rationalism is designed to distinguish my position from the 'critical rationalism' of Karl Popper and his followers, a position some have suggested is closer to empiricism. For example Stephen Stich (1979) contrasts Chomskian rationalism and Popperian empiricism. While Popper himself attempted to distance himself from the Vienna Circle, he endorsed the principle of empiricism "which asserts in science, only observation and experiment may decide upon the acceptance or rejection of scientific statements." (Popper, 1963, p. 45)

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While modern Neo-Tocquevillian accounts of civil society are not capable of offering a framework in which to assess the impact of political CSOs, de Tocqueville himself saw political action and democratic institutions as requisites for other sorts of civic action. He also warned of the dangers where political associations were forbidden, and warned of the dangers of a politically disengaged populace. Thus it is possible to acknowledge de Tocqueville's insights while adopting a Neo-Gramscian account of civil society that conceptualises civil society as a contested space, a public sphere, where political CSOs and social movements have a critical role in promoting discourse and debate.

By highlighting the Campaign Against Foreign Control of Aotearoa (CAFCA) as an organisation, I hope to draw attention to a lacuna in the literature, in the hope this will provide some insight into how the role of similar political CSOs can be assessed, and how assessments can be made as to the impact of such organisations.

This leads to the first major research question – (A) Did CAFCA make a discernible contribution to political debate/public sphere in New Zealand in the period from 1975 to the present? If so, how? Did this contribution vary according to changes in the structure of New Zealand political economy?

There are several reasons why a study of CAFCA may be able to provide some insights into how nationally focused political CSOs can play a role in civil society. First of all, CAFCA have outlasted many similar organisations and the group is closing on its 50th birthday. Secondly, CAFCA have operated in a political environment where the group have been marginalised by the growing influence of neoliberalism and related models of globalisation, and related calls to 'depoliticise' civil society.

This leads to the second major question – (B) Does CAFCA demonstrate how a civil society organisation can play a political role in civil society, particularly in an environment that is hostile to its aims? If so, how?

My research questions centre on two themes – assessing the contribution of CAFCA to political debate in New Zealand, and examining the role CAFCA has played in these debates. Potential sub-questions may cover one or both of these themes.

Major Research Questions

Did CAFCA make a discernible contribution to political debate/public sphere in New Zealand in the period from 1975 to the present? If so, how? Did this contribution vary according to changes in the structure of New Zealand political economy?

Does CAFCA demonstrate how a civil society organisation can play a political role in civil society, particularly in an environment that is hostile to its aims? If so, how?

Minor Research Questions

Did the CAFCA magazine ‘Foreign Control Watchdog’, published from 1975 onwards, make a discernible contribution to political debate/public sphere in New Zealand? If so, how?

How influential was CAFCA’s satirical “Roger Award” for the “worst transnational corporation operating in Aotearoa”, and how does this campaign show how a civil society organisation can play a political role in civil society?

12. Methodology

Single Case Study

A single case study will be adopted as the primary research strategy. This will allow a wide range of evidence to be considered, including interviews, media reports and other archival records. The utilisation of multiple data collection methods, and the potential of triangulation between these sources will provide stronger substantiation of constructs and hypotheses (Eisenhardt, 1989). While a research design that considers more than one case can generate evidence that may be more compelling, and the overall study seen as more robust by some observers, Yin (2009, p. 52) highlights five rationales that make a single case design “eminently justifiable”.

1. A critical test of existing significant theory
2. Rare or unique circumstances
3. A representative or typical case,
4. Where a case serves a revelatory; or
5. Longitudinal purpose

Many of these rationales are relevant to CAFCA. For example, CAFCA could be seen as providing a critical test of Putnam's claim that the impact of national political CSOs on creating social capital can only ever be tertiary. An examination of the influence of CAFCA as an organisation will directly address the lacuna in the civil society literature identified by Smith and Minkoff, and their concern that similar groups are minimised by most current conceptions of civil society. As noted above, the continued existence of CAFCA also represents a small challenge to the exaggerated claims made by the proponents and predictors of a deeply integrated world economy. As this includes claims made both about the past and the present, there is potential to utilise CAFCA as a longitudinal case. Eisenhardt (1989) highlights how theories can be built from case study research. In such research sampling is theoretical rather than random, thus efforts can be focused on theoretically useful cases that replicate or extend theory by filling conceptual categories. Similarly, Yin highlights how a "single case can represent a significant contribution to knowledge and theory building" (Yin, 2009, p. 47).

A multiple case design requires significantly greater resources and time that may be beyond the means of a single research investigator (Yin, 2009, p. 83). Thus, a single case design is adopted as a means of ensuring the research can be more easily containable within a PhD project. It is hoped that a study of CAFCA will encourage greater study of political CSOs with a national focus, and findings from this study will inform more detailed research designs which may include multiple cases, such as comparing the influence of one CSO with another.

Qualitative Methods

While case studies allow contemporary phenomena to be examined in depth and within a real life context (Yin, 2009, p. 11), methodological issues do arise in utilising qualitative research methods. Miles (1979) characterises qualitative data as an "attractive nuisance" and within-case analysis as "essentially intuitive, primitive, and unmanageable". While Miles acknowledges the attractive aspects of qualitative research, he believes that without thoughtful methodological inquiry, "qualitative research on organizations cannot be expected to transcend story-telling". In response to Miles article, Yin (1981) comments that the reader is left with a "sense that qualitative analysis – and its implicit companion, the case study – cannot be regarded as rational, much less scientific venture". Yin also highlights the importance of distinguishing between types of evidence (e.g. qualitative data), types of data collection methods and research strategies (such as case studies), as case studies can utilise both qualitative and quantitative evidence and various methods of data collection. He also challenges the view that experiments are the only way of

doing explanatory or causal inquiries and the only way to describe or test propositions. For example, historians regularly offer causal explanations for past events, and Yin gives examples of how even single case studies can be the basis for significant explanations and generalisations.

Brian Haig (2012) offers a more fundamental critique, highlighting how the distinction between quantitative and qualitative methods is now the subject of critical scrutiny, as mixed methods strategies become more common in psychology. Rather than viewing research methods as either qualitative or quantitative, Haig recommends a better understanding of research methods is more likely to be gained by recognising that most methods have both qualitative and quantitative dimensions. Haig also highlights how science is as much concerned with theory generation as it is with theory testing. As the philosopher Hillary Putnam puts it – there are maxims for discovery and maxims for justification – and “...the idea that correct ideas just come from the sky, while the methods for testing them are highly rigid and predetermined, is one of the worst legacies of the Vienna Circle.” (H. W. Putnam, 1974).

Nevertheless, there are a number of dangers when working with qualitative data, which are worth considering in the design of any study. A sole researcher can be overwhelmed by the sheer range of phenomena to be observed, and collecting and analysing this data can be a highly labour intensive operation. For Miles the most significant danger in the use of qualitative data is that methods of analysis are not well formulated. Faced with a bank of qualitative data, he believes the analyst has little protection against self-delusion, where a finding that may look “earthy”, “undeniable”, “serendipitous” is “not fact, wrong”. Miles could be read as arguing that at least some, perhaps most, qualitative research does not “deserve the name of science”. Yet Miles is wrong to imply this danger is limited to qualitative evidence, or limited to the social sciences. As Karl Popper (1963) recognised, the danger of dogmatic thinking is present in attempts to verify scientific laws and schemata, where it becomes easy to overemphasise the importance of supporting evidence, as confirmation of any theory can be found if one looks for such evidence. Just as Kant (1787) maintains we need organising principles on experience in order to formulate causal laws, Popper (1963, p. 45) claims we require “a system of expectations, anticipations, assumptions or interests”, in order to take the potentially infinite regularities in the world and limit observation to the relevant cases. This makes science possible. I agree with Popper that all observation in science is guided by theories, and that observation can never (or rarely) be prior to generalisation. One important and practical means of avoiding observer bias is to consult a wide range of evidence and to aim to include interviewees that may have contrasting views.

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Thus, there is a tension between imposing what might be seen as a self-blinding framework, and the need to ensure the data collected does not become a “bulky, irrelevant, meaningless set of observations” (Miles, 1979, p. 2) which no one can make sense of. Faced with a situation that appears unstructured, there is also a danger of over formulation to compensate, such as the example Miles himself gives of a coding scheme that was abandoned during the research due to fieldworker resistance and an acknowledgement that the coding scheme did not work as intended (Miles, 1979). Given the normative aspects of the debates concerning CSOs and conceptions of civil society I have highlighted above, I also want to respond to the concerns raised by Clarke (1998b) and Mercer (2002) that the failure of social scientists to theorise the political impact of NGOs, combined with the role of vested interests in promoting research, has led to an overly “inadequate, explicitly normative interpretation of NGO ideology.” (Clarke, 1998a, p. 40). I believe my literature review, in highlighting the disparate and highly contested nature of various notions of civil society suggests a common theoretical weakness. Many notions of civil society, particularly those with a Neo-Tocquevillian stripe, appear difficult to operationalize into an evaluative framework.

Thus for this project, the aim of the research focus and the related research questions is to provide a rough working frame, with some room for manoeuvre. For Eisenhardt (1989, p. 539), a key feature of theory building case research is the ability to adjust the data collection process if need be. As Yin has noted, such research methods are useful where the boundaries between context and phenomenon are not clearly defined, and copes with the technically distinctive situation where there are many more variables of interest than data points (Yin, 2009, p. 18). In attempting to highlight how national political CSOs may be significant causal variables in civil societies, it is hoped that this study will assist efforts to understand and clarify potential mechanisms and institutions.

Secondary Sources

These include

- The CAFCA magazine Foreign Control Watchdog from 1975 to the present
- Other newspaper and magazine articles covering CAFCA
- Parliamentary debates
- The Security Intelligence Service (SIS) file on CAFCA
- Minutes of CAFCA meetings, including records of strategy meetings held annually.

Interviews

Potential interview subjects include

- The key players/activists of CAFCA, including founding members Murray Horton and Bill Rosenberg.
- CAFCA members
- Journalists
- Members of Parliament
- Representatives from other NGO/civil society groups
- Independent Researchers/Economists
- Political commentators

Interview subjects included friends and supporters of CAFCA as well as those who may provide a more critical or oppositional perspective. While key activists from the earlier days, such as Owen Wilkes, have passed away, the CAFCA tradition of publishing detailed obituaries of key activists provides a unique opportunity to include the perspectives of political activists who are no longer with us.

I utilised the qualitative analysis software NVivo to identify themes and issues from 21 detailed interviews and a selection of core secondary sources. Some examples of these ‘nodes’ included:

- CAFCA as an organisation
- Criticisms of CAFCA
- Contribution to political debate
- Political space to operate
- Relationships
- Strengths
- Weaknesses
- Reasons for survival

I found it particularly helpful to create ‘subnodes’ under these themes as I went, as this gave me a means to identify and track issues that had not been apparent at the start of the project. Due to the time period under study, I found many of the secondary sources were not available in a digital form, and in the case of some newspapers and magazines, only available on microfiche.

13. Contribution

By highlighting CAFCA as an organisation I hope to highlight a lacuna in the civil society literature, in the hope this will provide some insights into how the role of similar political civil society organisations can be assessed, and how assessments can be made as to the impact of such organisations.

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This has implications for accounts of civil society and for descriptions of the relations of civil society vis-à-vis the state and the market. It suggests that if the impact of national CSOs on civil society can be ascertained, then accounts of civil society that perpetuate the invisibility of national political CSOs will be shown to be incomplete, and in some cases incoherent for the task attributed to them. The disparate and disjointed nature of the current literature on civil society makes it more difficult to move directly to consider the effectiveness of political civil society organisations.

The aim of this qualitative project is to help prepare the ground on which further qualitative and quantitative work on political CSOs can be undertaken.

The study of CAFCA will directly address the lacuna in the literature identified by Smith (2001) and Minkoff (2001).

As CAFCA has existed as an organisation for over 45 years, there are many aspects of CAFCA that could be the object of study. The aim of the research focus was to provide a research direction for this PhD project. The process of conducting research interviews may uncover other angles which can be noted as directions for future research.

The study of a New Zealand political civil society organisation may also provide insight into how such CSOs relate to the public sphere in a New Zealand context.

14. Risks/Limitations

Earlier I discussed the dangers of observer bias in science. This is particularly pertinent where a researcher has been personally involved in the organisation under study.

CAFCA is an organisation I have observed for many years, having first joined in 1999. From 2002 to 2006 I served on the CAFCA committee and contributed a few articles to *Foreign Control Watchdog*. Since my move to Auckland in 2007 I have had no official role in the organisation, although I did help with the local organising of the Roger Award when it was hosted by my employer FIRST Union in Auckland. Through my involvement with the organisation, I have been able to observe first-hand the way it operates, and I have gained a greater understanding of its longevity and impact.

I also gained a very high level of access, including generous access to interviewees, archives and unpublished internal documents. I am also very thankful for the generous attitude of my participants and their willingness to open about the strengths and weaknesses of the organisation

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and key individuals. As an example, Bill Rosenberg's unpublished internal strategy paper from 1995 is particularly valuable, as it demonstrated CAFCA's ability to be self-critical to a greater extent than may have previously been appreciated by outside observers. Such access allowed me to gain a far better understanding of CAFCA as an organisation.

As noted above, an important and practical means of avoiding observer bias is to consult a wide range of evidence and to aim to include interviewees that may have contrasting views. I also sought to address the potential for observer bias by including generous quotes from interviews to give participants more of an opportunity to 'speak for themselves'. The ability to triangulate between different sources and types of sources also allowed me to challenge my constructs and hypotheses, as well as gaining more than one lens on events. For example, I found it particularly useful to contrast evidence from interviews to those contained in documents and publications dating closer in time to the events under discussion. This allowed me to corroborate and augment evidence from a wide range of sources (Yin, 2009). As Yin (*ibid.*) notes, it is important to be aware how documents are written for a specific purpose and a specific audience other than those of the case study being undertaken. This is particularly pertinent for an organisation with political goals, who is also subject to the cut and thrust of political debate. The 'purpose' of the SIS file on CAFCA is a good case in point. The benefit of hindsight also allowed me to consider judgements made in the past alongside the growth and development of the organisation. It is my hope this work provides readers with a flavour of the debates that occurred in and around CAFCA and provides a springboard for others to conduct related work.

I now turn to the discussion of CAFCA, commencing with an overview of the life and times of CAFCA.

Chapter 4: Life and Times of CAFCA

In this chapter I will introduce the necessary background to discuss CAFCA's functioning as a CSO in Chapter 5. This will begin with a discussion of place, noting the founding of New Zealand as a colony of Great Britain in the 19th century, and explain how CAFCA emerged out of a long running radical culture that developed in the southern city of Christchurch. I will also attempt to explain how this relates to the intellectual culture of the city and its long history of left wing publishing.

I will explain how CAFCA emerged from the New Left social movements of the late 1960s and early 1970s, as a group of peace movement activists opposed to an American military bases in New Zealand became more interested in economic questions. I trace the origin of CAFCA's ideas about economic management, beginning with New Zealand's early tariff measures in the 19th century, through to the system of import licencing introduced by the First Labour Government in the 1930s as a means of developing local industry. I sketch the basis of an intellectual tradition that could have influenced CAFCA and introduce figures such as Bill Sutch, Jack Lewin, Wolfgang Rosenberg and William Pember Reeves.

Despite originating from a government policy that aimed to give New Zealand a wider industrial base and greater economic independence, the aluminium smelter at Bluff has been the key site of debates concerning foreign control for over half a century. In this chapter I will explain the origins of this project and CAFCA's founding campaigning effort - the 'Resistance Ride'. This will be followed by a detailed discussion in chapter 7 concerning the reaction to the release by CAFCA of confidential company documents in 1980.

I will conclude by looking at how CAFCINZ developed themselves as an organisation and centred their focus on 'foreign control'. This will include how CAFCINZ answered internal and external critics who questioned the wisdom of CAFCINZ's advocacy of economic nationalism and instead advocated for CAFCINZ to base itself around a more general opposition to capitalism.

15. New Zealand as a colony

In order to explain the origin of CAFCA's economic rationale it is helpful to begin with the founding of Aotearoa as a colony of Great Britain in the 19th century. In 1840 representatives of the British Crown and New Zealand's indigenous population, the Maori people, signed the

Treaty of Waitangi, which acted to drive the colonisation of New Zealand by British settlers. Colonisation, in turn, drove the advent of capital, initially in modest degree as an effect of colonisation, subsequently in greater volumes as domestic productive capacity expanded and New Zealand became integrated into global trade and investment arrangements.

It may be that the long-term historical reliance of the New Zealand economy on foreign capital also created an undercurrent of unease of the economic, social and political impact of the import of such capital. This unease was present, and most likely began, among the Maori people following the colonisation of New Zealand by Europeans in the 19th century. The unease may also have travelled with the ships that brought the colonists here. I was interested to find in my own family history that trade issues may have been one of the motivations for my Hendren ancestors leaving their Irish farm to emigrate to New Zealand in 1878. A series of bad agricultural seasons in the late 1870s coincided with the first shipments of cheap transatlantic grain into Ireland, meaning that low yields were accompanied by low prices for the first time. This is described in my family history as “free trade coming home to roost” (R. Hendren, 2001). The potential Irish influence on thinking relating to foreign control and “a kind of general scepticism around the establishment” was raised independently by participant Mary Ellen O’Connor (personal communication, 16 May 2015), who agreed British economic control of Ireland may have encouraged some Irish to emigrate to New Zealand.

New Zealand was governed as part of New South Wales from 1840 to 1841. One of the first actions following its separation was a Customs Regulation Ordinance that introduced New Zealand’s first local tariffs. These tariffs focused on the accumulation of revenue rather than offering respite for nascent industry. In 1869 the New Zealand Colonial Treasurer Julius Vogel advocated for a protective tariff in Parliament: “The word protection is an ugly one, and it would be better if we called it the development of local industry” (T. Simpson, 2016, p. 2). While members of the Liberal Government of 1890-1912 did harbour concerns about the effect of tariffs for local people on basic foodstuffs, the economic historian Lloyd Prichard (1970, p. 140) notes tariffs took a distinctly protective form by 1895. That said, it was not really until the instigation of a system of import licencing and exchange controls by the first Labour Government in 1938 that the development of local industry became a clear aim of trade policy. While these controls were initially designed to be temporary they remained a key part of New Zealand economic management until the 1970s. The record of New Zealand in maintaining full employment, balance of payments equilibrium, economic growth and stable price levels through this period was described as an “economic miracle” by the economist Wolfgang Rosenberg

(1993, p. 30). The economic historian Gary Hawke suggests that the importance of the controls was not just economic, but “also symbolic. They represent a broad decision that the course of the New Zealand economy should be determined less by events overseas and more by the choice of local people, especially those holding official positions.” (Hawke, 1985, p. 148).

The economic policy of the Second Labour Government, led by Walter Nash, looked to identify new export markets, extend the system of import licencing, encourage greater industrialisation and import substitution. In the long run these policies aimed to help New Zealand outgrow its colonial economy (Sinclair, 1976, p. 342). As the Secretary of Industries and Commerce during the Nash government, Dr William Ball Sutch was an influential figure. In 1960 Sutch organised an Industrial Development Conference, where Nash delivered a slightly revised address written initially by Sutch, where Nash called for the country to be made less dependent on overseas conditions (Sinclair, 1976, p. 343). Schooled in institutional economics at the University of Columbia, Sutch became a prominent advocate of New Zealand economic nationalism, publishing a series of books examining New Zealand history and highlighting the dangers of allowing multinational corporations greater control over the economy. *Takeover New Zealand* (1972) was very influential in the development of CAFCA’s ideas. A senior investigating officer of Treasury, Richard Carey rather grudgingly acknowledged the appeal of Sutch’s ideas in 1975.

“Dr Sutch is passionately convinced that New Zealanders had the potential opportunity to grasp control of all sectors of the economy in the 1930s and to develop a unique and benevolent society with a strong national identity and under fairly complete national control. Whether this aspiration ever had any prospects of becoming reality is beside the point: the concept is an appealing one to many and the autarchic policies advocated on the basis of it have enjoyed wide; if somewhat uncritical support.” - Richard Carey quoted in (Trotter, 2007, p. 284)

Sutch describes 19th century New Zealand as the story of land monopoly, where small farmers and others desired greater access.

“Land monopoly was still so flagrant as to make a majority of thinkers advocate either direct nationalisation of the land or at least a single-tax on land as advocated by Henry George. No other economic writer, except perhaps Adam Smith, has had such an effect on New Zealand as had Henry George, for the difference between the landed and the landless and the evils that resulted therefrom were too obvious to deny.” (Sutch, 1966, p. 75)

While a desire to ‘break up the large estates’ assisted the election of the Liberal Government in 1890, the resulting land tax would be best described as accelerating a process that was already underway (Easton, 2020, p. 189; Sutch, 1966, p. 77). A New Zealand attitude of ‘use it or lose

it' in regard to land can also be traced to this time (Brooking, 1996). This philosophy, along with a residual influence of George⁸, may lie behind popular concern over the sale of high country stations to foreign buyers a century later, where the news media often looked to CAFCA for comment on the sale of rural land, as I describe in Chapter 5.

This helps explain how a desire for New Zealand to outgrow its colonial economy and local attitudes concerning the use and ownership of land helped to create a constituency for the ideas later championed by CAFCA.

16. The Christchurch context

While the 20th century saw the emergence in New Zealand of a growing and perhaps at times, reluctant, national identity, in the 19th century regional identities were more prominent. Canterbury, and its largest city Christchurch, had a reputation for being less egalitarian and more 'aristocratic' than the other provinces.

“Christchurch has a reputation for having a long-surviving, influential group which has monopolised social position and political power for all of the city’s history.... An upper class and clear social differentiation were inherent, according to this description of Christchurch society, in the Canterbury Association’s original intent to transplant to Canterbury a cross-section of English society, complete with an aristocracy and suitably deferential middle and lower classes.” (J. Wilson & CCC, 2013).

Yet labour historian Jim McAloon warns this aristocratic class may not have lasted beyond 1914, or possibly 1940, as economic and political power spread beyond the ranks of the elite. He argues the “Christchurch elite had far less power than has often been assumed, and often it mattered only to itself.” (McAloon, 2000b, p. 193). Nevertheless, given this reputation, it is somewhat of a surprise that Christchurch became a stronghold for a radical left wing political culture. Christchurch’s political radicalism may be a reaction to this 'aristocratic' image, which could still act as a motivation even if the reputation had greater power than the reality.

In the first years of the twentieth century Christchurch rivalled Auckland as an industrial centre (Rice, 2008, p. 51). It possessed the strongest trade union movement in New Zealand. In 1914 the city was characterised as “the home of militant anti-militarism and socialist activity” by the *Maoriland Worker* (McAloon, 2000a, p. 162). Christchurch activists dominated both the Socialist Party and the Social Democratic Party (SDP), two of the most important precursor

⁸ While George himself was in favour of free trade and opposed land nationalisation, many 'Georgist' movements around the world took different directions.

organisations of the New Zealand Labour Party (McAloon, 2000a, p. 177; Plumridge, 1985). On these grounds McAloon (2000a, p. 191) argues that Christchurch, at least as much as the West Coast, may be regarded as the cradle of the Labour Party (1916). While the New Zealand Federation of Labour had less influence in Christchurch in these years, they gained greater influence in the early years of the Labour party in part by politically outmanoeuvring the Christchurch branches, some of whom wished to keep their SDP identity. The existence of distinct regional political cultures is also supported by Erik Olssen's observation that different modes of production can exist within the same political economy in New Zealand, where "distinct economic modes dominate particular localities and generate their own sort of distinctive social systems." (Taylor, 2002, p. 192).

Cookson (2000b, p. 359) describes Christchurch as a city of artisans, workers from skilled trades who worked with their hands. Such workers place a high value on securing their livelihood and owning their own home – their independence. Cookson argues Christchurch exemplified this kind of society to a greater extent than Wellington and Auckland.

"The impression is that Christchurch's high rate of property ownership did produce stronger participation in local politics, and, if true, this strong culture of citizenship surely helps to explain Christchurch's radical tradition." (J. E. Cookson, 2000b, p. 360)

While a rise in home ownership amongst the working class between 1950 and 1980 is associated with a move of their politics to the right in the United Kingdom, David Thorns(1984) points out these explanations are not relevant to societies like New Zealand where there was early state support for owner occupation, where home ownership became part of the struggle of working people to extend control over their living conditions. Yet high levels of home ownership can only be a partial explanation for Christchurch's radical culture, as New Zealand home ownership rates peaked in 1991 (Stats NZ, 2021) at a point where the radical culture was already in decline. But it is directly relevant for CAFCA, as having access to a freehold house meant the organisation did not have to bear the costs of renting an office.

In his study of the Christchurch working class suburb of Addington, John Wilson (2018, p. 69) describes this radicalism as reformist rather than revolutionary, and notes that only a minority of Addington's workers adopted a radical working class identity. He also makes the fascinating observation that people with strong Addington roots or associations often adopted more militant stances in favour of working class interests when they became politically active at the municipal or national levels. Wilson's observation may speak to a wider phenomenon. It would be

interesting to know to what extent Christchurch political figures adopted more radical stances for a national audience.

A significant number of national political organisations also came out of Christchurch, particularly those championing the causes of labour, feminism, anti-militarism and trade issues. In December 1887 the Canterbury Labour Union became a chapter of the American labour federation, the Knights of Labour. The Knights exerted significant influence over their short history, mobilising many workers to elect the Liberal Government in 1890, which then adopted many of the reforms advocated by the Knights (McAloon, 2000a; Roth, 1966). Harry Ell, a Christchurch Knight who became a prominent Liberal MP called the Knights ‘the first federated political body to exist in New Zealand’ (R. E. Weir, 2002, p. 30). While Weir notes this claim is disputed, he concludes that the Knights were one of the first organisations to organise in New Zealand on a national, rather than a regional level. In 1893 New Zealand became the first country in the world to grant women the vote, thanks to a campaign spearheaded by suffrage leader Sheppard from her Christchurch home (Pickles, 2016). The National Council of Women was founded in Christchurch in 1896, with Sheppard as President (McAloon, 2000a, p. 171). Later significant organisations included Christian World Service (CWS) (1945), the New Zealand Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament (1959), TradeAid (1973), New Zealand Nuclear Free Committee (1981)⁹, GATT Watchdog(1989). In 1973, Christchurch hosted the first environment centre in New Zealand and became a stronghold for the Values Party, one of the first Green parties in the world. With both CAFCA and GATT Watchdog based in the city in the 1990s, Christchurch possessed particular expertise in trade and investment issues (Horton, 1999). CWS activist Gillian Southey wonders why so many of the aid agencies came out of Christchurch rather than Wellington, but is unsure as to the reason. Burnard (2000, p. 130) makes the interesting observation that early manufacturing in Christchurch was inward looking and non-export orientated, at least in comparison to Auckland and Wellington. He also notes that few major national companies or multinationals have emerged, “there are no Christchurch equivalents to Lion Nathan, Fletcher Challenge or Watties” (Burnard, 2000, p. 132). Yet Burnard may underestimate the strength of the Christchurch manufacturing sector and companies like Skellerup Rubber, Hamilton Jet and Tait Communications, all of whom emerged from Christchurch and attained national and international reach (B. Rosenberg, personal communication, 11 September 2021). Burnard also detects an unreceptive attitude within the

⁹ See Larry Ross Obituary for its importance in the campaign for a nuclear free NZ.

Christchurch populace to big business and ‘cowboy’ forms of entrepreneurship. It would be interesting to know the extent to which these attitudes may have shaped the national political CSOs that emerged in Christchurch, and may explain why Christchurch organisations were more sympathetic to notions of self-sufficiency in debates over trade issues. This may be an interesting avenue for future research.

17. The source of Christchurch’s left wing intellectuals

Christchurch’s radical political culture also developed an intellectual base. Christchurch cradled an active Workers’ Educational Association (WEA) and a long tradition of left wing publishing. While home ownership may have provided the security to become radicals, enough of the radicals also became interested in ideas.

From the 1880s Christchurch attempted to portray itself as the education capital of New Zealand, highlighting the early establishment of Canterbury Museum (1867) and the University of Canterbury (1873) (J. E. Cookson, 2000a, p. 22). At the time Dunedin could have also claimed the title, becoming the location of New Zealand’s first university in 1869. In contrast, the University of Auckland opened in 1883 and Victoria University of Wellington in 1899. But it is likely the differences between the cities faded as New Zealand’s state-funded education system developed. John Cookson identifies an intellectual rivalry between Christchurch and Wellington in particular; “Wellington’s middle class increased with the growth of government and services there, providing the patronage that underlies its long-standing argument with Christchurch over which is livelier culturally and intellectually.” (J. E. Cookson, 2000a, p. 26)

Tommy Taylor was a prominent figure in the political culture of Christchurch. As a radical independent MP during the reign of the Liberal Government, Taylor campaigned to speed land reform efforts. He also opposed New Zealand’s involvement in the Boer War and the 1909 decision of the Liberal Cabinet to present a dreadnought battleship to Britain without parliamentary consent. (Grigg, 1993). Christchurch was also the powerbase of William Pember Reeves, the most radical minister in Richard Seddon’s Liberal Cabinet between 1893 and 1896. In 1898 he published an influential history of New Zealand, *The Long White Cloud*, which heralded New Zealand as a progressive society¹⁰. Reeves left for London to become New Zealand’s Agent General, and later became the Director of the London School of Economics.

¹⁰ Reeves opposition to Asian immigration would not be regarded by many as progressive. A century later, the conservative nationalist politician Winston Peters would unleash similar sentiments during the 1996 election campaign.

Some refer to Reeves as the architect of state socialism in New Zealand (Moloney, 2002). While Reeves saw New Zealand society and culture as an extension of Britain, he could still be regarded as a colonial nationalist, invoking a nationalism of place, where the ordinary calloused-handed pioneer was the hero of the settlement, not the revered pilgrims of the ‘first four ships’ (J. E. Cookson, 2000a, pp. 22–23). It is interesting to speculate if these nationalistic, democratic overtones in Reeves’ thought are a precursor of the progressive nationalism advocated by CAFCA.

Christchurch was also the centre of independent left-wing publishing from the 1930s to the end of the century (B. Jesson, 1990; J. Wilson & CCC, 2013). This included the two most notable journals of the period, *Tomorrow* (1934-1940) and *Monthly Review* (1960-1996) (McAloon, 2000a, p. 187). Christchurch hosted the headquarters of the publisher Caxton Press and a literary movement known as ‘cultural nationalism’ (King, 2003, p. 381). Peter Simpson (2016) likens the artistic and literary scene in Christchurch to the Bloomsbury Group active in London from 1910 to 1930, and suggests this national movement centred around Christchurch could be a ‘Bloomsbury South’. Horrocks (2007) describes this movement as “not a complacent, jingoistic nationalism – it was highly critical of the status quo, and in many cases it could be better described as ‘localism’ or ‘regionalism’”.

The Christchurch intellectual climate also benefited from some wider influences. The 1930s saw a number of Jewish left wing intellectuals fleeing to New Zealand to escape the growing influence of Nazi Germany. Most notable among these was the arrival in 1937 of the Austrian philosopher Karl Popper to teach at the University of Canterbury. The same year also saw the arrival of Bill Rosenberg’s father, Wolfgang Rosenberg (Wolfgang) in Wellington (Horton, 2007b). He shifted to Christchurch at the end of the war. Schooled at the French College in Berlin, Wolfgang actively modelled the role of the public intellectual – a role Chris Trotter describes as “almost unknown to New Zealanders of that era” (Trotter, 2007, p. 210). Wolfgang became a prolific writer on the left, contributing to the Labour Party journal *The Standard* and *Landfall*. Under his pen name as ‘Criticus’, Wolfgang’s articles earned the angry eye of Prime Minister Peter Fraser (Rhodes, 1980, p. 15). He was also central to the creation of *Monthly Review*. Its founding editor, H. Winston Rhodes, describes Wolfgang as the “chief guiding force” (Rhodes, 1980, p. 17). Wolfgang acted as secretary for *Monthly Review* for most of its existence. With Keynes and developmental economist Raoul Prebisch as key influences (Brooke et al., 2016; W. Rosenberg, 1993), Wolfgang became a prominent economist based at the

University of Canterbury, defending an approach to the economy similar to that later championed by CAFCA.

A number of influential thinkers emerged out of Christchurch in the 1960s and 1970s, particularly in regards to economic questions. This included not only Murray Horton and Bill Rosenberg, but also Brian Easton, Bruce Jesson, Tony Simpson and Brian Roper. A native South African, Rob Steven, arrived in Christchurch in 1974 to join the Political Science Department at the University of Canterbury. In the words of one activist he was embraced fulsomely as “one of us” as he sought to grapple with the interlocking dynamics of political economy, imperialism, Maori sovereignty, class struggle and feminism (Small, 2001). He later became a CAFCA member. A collective centred around Steven continued the Christchurch tradition of left wing publishing into the 1980s with *Race Gender Class* (1985-1992). Despite the collective having a diverse membership, including a majority of women and Pacifica members, *Race Gender Class* did not survive Steven’s move to Sydney in 1992 (Boraman, 2016, p. 54; Small, 2001). In 1989 a new activist research organisation, GATT Watchdog, formed to challenge the neoliberal push for free trade. This included the publication from Christchurch of *The Big Picture* from 1995 to 2005, which increased the profile of activist intellectuals such as Aziz Choudry and Leigh Cookson.

While *The Republican* (1974-1996) was published in Auckland, its founder and editor Bruce Jesson hailed from Christchurch. The Republican later merged with *New Zealand Political Review* (1992-2005) of Dunedin¹¹. With Owen Wilkes, Murray Horton and Wolfgang Rosenberg acting as regular writers for *Monthly Review*, *Foreign Control Watchdog* can be seen as a continuation of the tradition of left wing publishing in Christchurch, even if it is now the only journal remaining in print. It is also noteworthy that *Watchdog* ‘obituaries’ of earlier publications and of their key personnel are now a notable record of their achievements.

The intellectual climate of Christchurch may have also been assisted by its reputation for showing tolerance for its more colourful characters. Christchurch has provided a home for a succession of eccentrics, both of the political and religious flavours (McAloon, 2000a; Rice, 2008; T. Simpson, 2017). The historian Peter O’Connor (1968,p. 21) even went as far as to describe a ‘Barmy Christchurch’, noting the complaint of the Christchurch Star newspaper in December 1919 that the city had “more cranks to the acre than any other large centre that could

¹¹ It is possible further work could identify similarities between the intellectual culture of Christchurch and Dunedin, particularly given the prominence of the University of Otago in Dunedin life. In its early years, the literary journal *Landfall* was edited by Dunedin poet Charles Brasch and published in Christchurch by the Caxton Press.

be named. A clumsy charlatan he is who cannot succeed here for a time. And when to that type of impostor we add the rabid anti-militarists and pacifists—noisy nuisances, most of them” (‘Making a Name for Ourselves!’, 1919).

CAFCA activists highlighted that there were some advantages for CAFCA to be based in Christchurch. Some described the political scene in Christchurch as “less fraught”, where it was easier to be idiosyncratic than in other places. While some level of internecine tensions occur in any left political scene, it was noted they did not pose the same obstacles to joint actions as in Wellington or Auckland (Choudry, 2008). In her study of the Resistance Bookshops movement (1969-77) Megan Simpson (2007, p. 46) notes that the Christchurch bookshop¹² operated as a centre of left-wing political activity in the city, bringing groups together in a way that did not occur in Auckland and Wellington due to more entrenched sectarianism in these cities. While this is a function of the size of Christchurch, and its distance from other major centres, activists pointed to the long history of Christchurch political radicalism as the source of this culture.

While many acknowledge the existence of a radical culture in Christchurch there is also a sense that today it may not be as prominent as it once was. In the late 1970s Christchurch stopped growing, and began to lose population, especially younger adults, to Australia and the North Island (Rice, 2008, p. 128). This included thinkers such as Easton, Jesson, Simpson and Locke, who moved to either Wellington or Auckland in the late 1960s and 1970s. Yet it is still possible that this radical culture may re-emerge in new forms. In the aftermath of the 2010 and 2011 earthquakes, historian John Wilson (J. Wilson & CCC, 2013, p. 239) notes that the existence of a property owning elite has once again become more prominent, particular in regards to the rebuild of the city. More than a century ago, similar perceptions sparked a radical reaction.

While I have focused on the potential origins of a left wing intellectual tradition in Christchurch one of my interviewees suggested there may also be distinct intellectual traditions on the political right (S. Newberry, personal communication, 23 January 2015). One potential source of this may be the economics department at the University of Canterbury. Anthony Endres (1991) attempts to identify features of a Canterbury tradition in economics in the first half of the twentieth century. He notes a focus on applied economic analysis and a predilection for free market forms of economic organisation, but also a practical component that delineates the position of the early Canterbury economists from the die-hard exponents of *laissez faire*. Later

¹² The Christchurch Resistance bookshop served as the venue for CAFGINZ meetings in the early years.

graduates included Graham Scott¹³ and Bryce Wilkinson, both of whom played an influential role in moving the New Zealand Treasury and the Fourth Labour Government in a strong *laissez-faire* direction (Kelsey, 1995, p. 47).

I will now explain the background to a key target of CAFCA's campaigning efforts – the Bluff aluminium smelter. The smelter's role in the New Zealand economy, and its relationship with Government, is a powerful leitmotif of CAFCA's history and is central to later discussion in this analysis.

18. The beginnings of Comalco

In a deep irony, one of the key projects promoted by the Nash government as a means of encouraging greater industrialisation and economic independence, later became a poster child for foreign control. In January 1960 the government reached agreement with the Australian mining company Consolidated Zinc to investigate the potential of building a power station and an aluminium smelter to utilise the power generated. In return, the company was given an exclusive right to develop and use the water in Lake Manapouri and Te Anau for 99 years (Lind, 1996, pp. 32–33). The company sought the ability to raise and lower lake levels in order to guarantee electricity supply, so it was agreed Manapouri could be raised 84 inches (2.1 metres) above its natural levels (Lusk & Currie, 1982, p. 12). The smelter was to be operated by an Australian subsidiary Commonwealth Aluminium Corporation Proprietary Ltd (COMALCO), itself a joint venture with Kaiser Aluminium and Chemical Corporation of the United States (Rio Tinto plc, 2017). The proposal faced immediate opposition. Conservation groups such as Royal Forest and Bird presented a petition of 24,864 people asking Parliament not to validate the agreement and called for no alteration to the natural level of Lake Manapouri. The enabling legislation was passed on 7 October 1960 with support from both the Government and the Opposition. In November 1960 New Zealand had a change of government and Keith Holyoake of the National Party became Prime Minister.

In September 1962 the company informed the New Zealand Government it was seeking to withdraw from the agreement to develop Manapouri due to other demands on the capital of the company. In response Holyoake asked if Comalco would guarantee to build a smelter in New Zealand if the government built the hydroelectric scheme (Lind, 1996, p. 40). This became the basis for a Heads of Agreement signed in 1963, where Comalco exchanged its water rights for

¹³ Scott did his Masters in Economics at Canterbury and his PhD at Duke University in the USA.

the right to receive 460 megawatts of continuous electric power from a Government-owned power station at Manapouri (Lind, 1996, pp. 40–41). Freed from having to build and operate a power station, another consequence of the agreement was that maintaining the scenic values of the National Park became the responsibility of the government.

This was to become a major political issue. Concerns over the environmental damage and the loss of scenic values led to the formation of the Save Manapouri Campaign (SMC) in October 1969, led by farmer Ron McClean. The campaign picked up support across the ideological spectrum, with scientists, members of Forest and Bird, trade unionists and students rubbing shoulders with future National Party MPs and stalwarts of the Chambers of Commerce (King, 2003, p. 442). By March 1970, a total of 265,906 people, approximately 10 per cent of New Zealand's population, signed a petition opposing the raising of the lakes. At the time it was the largest petition ever presented to a New Zealand Parliament (Stitt, 1980). Addressing a crowd outside Parliament, Prime Minister Keith Holyoake was forced to acknowledge a banner that asked "Who owns this country, the NZ People or Comalco" (Stitt, 1980). A subsequent government inquiry found that the Crown was contractually bound by the 1960 agreement to raise the lake. A cold and dry winter of 1972 demonstrated the damaging effects of lowering the lakes below their natural levels. In the lead-up to the 1972 election, the leader of the Labour Party, Norman Kirk promised the lakes would not be raised. The issue helped Labour become the government. (B. Ansley, 1989b; Dann, 1999, p. 250; NZPA, 1980). While Kirk kept this promise, his government failed to change the law that allowed the lake to be raised (Lusk & Currie, 1982, p. 16). Perhaps inadvertently, Comalco sparked the birth of the modern environmental movement in New Zealand (Bain, 2008; Horton, 1992b; King, 2003, p. 443; Lind, 1996, p. 103). The wide level of support gained by SMC makes them one of the most significant protest movements in the history of the country.

While Save Manapouri did not oppose the smelter and the industrial development it represented, the campaign did help to create a level of scepticism towards the actions of Comalco into which CAFCA were later able to tap. Public distrust was also fuelled by suspicions, first, that there were secret provisions in the agreement with the government (Nathan, 2015) and, second, about the secrecy around the price Comalco were paying for power compared to residential and other industrial users. Former Forest and Bird President and Save Manapouri campaigner, Alan Mark, believes the public reaction to the veil of secrecy the government attempted to place over issues like the Comalco deal became a key driver in the passing of the Official Information Act in 1982

(Bain, 2008). For this and many other reasons, SMC should be regarded as one of the most significant protest movements in New Zealand history.

Other actions taken by Comalco added to the scepticism. In 1970 the company offered discounted shares to a favoured selection of Australasian politicians, public servants, journalists, judges and company directors prior to a public offering (Lusk & Currie, 1982, p. 7; Williams, 1970). Such an action made it easy to portray Comalco as a multinational out to increase its influence. Comalco may also have been attempting to combat concerns about its dominant overseas ownership, but as less than 10 per cent of the company was for sale Comalco remained firmly in overseas control (Lusk & Currie, 1982, p. 7).

In the Republican magazine of May 1975, Bruce Jesson (1975), perhaps unfairly, questions whether Sutch himself was the “the man who gave us Comalco?” Jesson claims it stands to reason that Sutch himself must have had something to do with the Comalco agreement, as he was the Labour Party’s chief architect of industrialisation. Jesson also notes Sutch was among the select group who accepted a small parcel of shares in Comalco at a discounted price in 1970, a matter I will discuss further below. In this context, Jesson does not discuss the constitutional convention of ministerial accountability, which would suggest Nash and his Minister of Works Hugh Watt bear ultimate responsibility for the Comalco deal. Secret agreements were signed with a number of other overseas companies to establish industrial projects (B. Jesson, 1975; Sinclair, 1976, p. 343). In this environment, a policy of import substitution created an incentive for foreign investment, as foreign companies could set up factories as a means of entering the local market.

Yet Jesson is wrong to imply there was universal support for the Comalco deal from within the department. On the eve of the deal with Comalco, a senior, able and influential public servant, the Assistant Secretary of Industries and Commerce, Jack Lewin, sent a memo in which he warned the government it was giving too much away (Sinclair, 1976, p. 343).

In a later section I will look at how CAFCA became involved in the debate over the smelter. Now, I will explain CAFCA’s origins in the peace movement and their opposition to military forms of foreign control.

19. The Emergence of CAFGINZ from the Peace Movement

For the ‘counter-culture’ and ‘New Left’ social movements of the late 1960s, opposition to the Vietnam War was a key focus. One of the most active and militant groups in New Zealand was

the Progressive Youth Movement (PYM), which described itself as a ‘revolutionary vanguard’. Many of the younger members of the Auckland PYM were also members of the Communist Party of New Zealand (CPNZ). In the context of the cold war, communists and suspected ‘fellow travellers’ were marginalised, as were those who opposed the military that some believed offered protection from communism. I will return to the theme of marginalisation in the next chapter. While the shared membership did lead some to associate the PYM with the CPNZ, in fact the CPNZ had little influence in Christchurch as most of the PYM membership from 1969 to 1972 were anarchists (Boraman, 2002). Around 1970 an anarchist called Murray Horton emerged as one of the Christchurch PYM’s most prominent leaders.

In June 1968 another CAFCA founder, Owen Wilkes, published an article with Phil Howell of the University of Canterbury, highlighting the proposal to build a US Navy transmitter at Lake Pearson. This would have formed part of a global navigation system for submarines based on Very Low Frequency (VLF) signals. The subsequent campaign against the base stopped it being built and still remains one of the greatest, if not the greatest, success of campaigns against military bases in New Zealand. It made Owen Wilkes a household name (Horton, 2005c). This led to a series of ad-hoc committees to organise protests at US military facilities at Woodbourne, Mt John and Harewood in the early 1970s. Murray Horton recalled events at Mt John:

“...[the Police attacked protesters with fists, boots and dogs with several being bitten and otherwise seriously injured – we retaliated by wrecking the single access road up the mountain, stranding the Americans and the cops. The national backlash against protesters reached hysterical proportions, but equally so was the reaction against the cops (who have never again unleashed dogs onto protesters).” (Horton, 2005c)

It was through this lively protest that Murray Horton first met John Christie and Bill Rosenberg (Horton, 2015b). These ad-hoc committees developed into the Campaign Against Foreign Military Activities in New Zealand (CAFMANZ) in 1972.

In 1974, 11 members of CAFMANZ, including Owen Wilkes, Murray Horton and Peter Lusk travelled to Australia to take part in a three week ‘Long March’ to protest at the US North West Cape naval communications station in Western Australia. As well as visiting military bases, the Long March also highlighted the economic aspects of foreign control, a focus that turned out to be influential on the formation of CAFMANZ. The long bus trips across Australia allowed time for lengthy political discussion and reflection. Peter Lusk recalls a discussion with Owen Wilkes in the front seat of the bus where Owen suggested there needed to be a group in New Zealand that campaigned against both foreign military bases and the corporate penetration of New

Zealand. In terms of the latter, Owen's exemplar was Rio Tinto/Comalco, which appeared to the activists as having "the government around its little finger in a way that previous investors like say, the meat monopolies hadn't been able to. It seemed a big step up in the degree of control that these corporates had over the government." (P. Lusk, personal communication, 3 May 2015). On their return to New Zealand the activists organised a New Zealand version of the 'Long March' - The South Island Resistance Ride. The Campaign Against Foreign Control in New Zealand (CAFCINZ) was born.

"The difference between CAFCINZ and what came before is that we now devoted a lot of attention to the economic manifestations of foreign control; we targeted what were then called multinational corporations (which we now call transnationals). In short, we broadened our definition of imperialism."
(Horton, 2015b)

20. Support from an unexpected source

While seeking funds for the Resistance Ride in 1974, CAFCINZ received an expression of support from an unexpected source, Jack Lewin, then head of a major government department, .

"Speaking personally and not for the Department of Trade and Industry, the headship of which I will leave in October, you could not find a more perfervid opponent of foreign capitalist penetration of New Zealand than myself. In fact in the matter of Comalco I, first at the instance of Nash and later at that of J.R. Marshall, fought the Comalco crowd in negotiations for ten years. My position was that I wanted at all cost to prevent their even starting up, but all that my obduracy and arguing power did was marginally to improve the position for New Zealand and enable the politicians to present the swindle more positively."
(J. Lewin, personal communication, 5 August 1974)

He also enclosed a donation of \$5, which is the equivalent of \$60 in 2021 dollars¹⁴. Lewin also indicated that Sutch did not intend to purchase the Comalco shares offered to him in 1971.

"While on the subject of Comalco I think you might have done an injustice to Bill Sutch about his 500 shares. When they were purchased for him...he came to me in some distress and said that his broker, who had a general authority, had accepted this offer on his behalf but, on his instructions, had sold the shares immediately.... But the point is that that particular transaction does not vitiate in any way the position taken by Bill Sutch in his "Takeover New Zealand" (J. Lewin, personal communication, 5 August 1974).

Despite being "the most strenuous official opponent negotiator with this consortium over many years", Lewin reports he too was offered 600 shares, an offer he declined.

¹⁴ Reserve Bank of New Zealand Inflation Calculator, <http://www.rbnz.govt.nz/monetary-policy/inflation-calculator>

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CAFCINZ wrote back to Lewin and asked his permission to publish his letter in CANTA, the University of Canterbury student magazine. In his reply, Lewin gave CAFCINZ precise instructions as to what parts of the letter could be published.

"On the question of whether you have my approval to publish my letter in Cantata, I prefer that you do not publish my reference to Comalco at this stage. After all, I am still Secretary of the Department of Trade and Industry. Later on, as a private citizen who could not in any context be reproached or processed under the Official Secrets Act (although I don't think I could by reason of my letter to you), I will myself be saying a lot about Comalco. You can then use that if it is of any use to you. I think your idea of putting the record right for Bill Sutch is a very good one....." (J. Lewin, personal communication, 5 August 1974)

Following a story in the University of Canterbury student newspaper *CANTA* ('Top Civil Servant Supports Campaign', 1974) on 16 September 1974, Lewin's support was also picked up by the mainstream media, and this helped to publicise the Resistance Ride ('Campaign against Comalco', 1974; 'Inside Backing', 1974). The coverage was noted by the Christchurch office of the Security Intelligence Service (SIS). On a page of photocopied clippings headed "MD Horton and JP Lewin, Personal Files" there was a handwritten note: "Horton is really getting the most propaganda he can out of this \$5 donation from Lewin" (Horton, 2009a). In December 1976, CAFCINZ wrote to Lewin to ask again if they could publish the letter in full, but they have no reply on file ('Jack Lewin and Comalco: An Untold Story', 1990). Following the death of Lewin in May 1990 CAFCA discussed the letter again, took outside advice, and decided to publish the letter in full, publicising the extent of Lewin's opposition to the Comalco project for the first time. The Lewin letter provides a rare insight into the debates that occur within government over commercial negotiations with multinational companies and deepens the historical record in regards to Sutch's attitudes to Comalco, particularly as Sutch had been accused of inconsistency in accepting the Comalco shares. On 21 September 1974 the *Christchurch Press* quoted from a CAFCINZ poster and the call from "the group of young radicals" to shut the smelter down ('Campaign against Comalco', 1974).

The intentions of the Resistance Riders to visit Mt John following the now famous protest of 1972 led the University of Canterbury Council to ban demonstrators from the access road to the Mt John Observatory and tracking station. This led to a front page story in the *Press* on the eve of the Resistance Ride in which the activists declared "no intention of storming the hill" (NZPA, 1975a).

21. The Resistance Ride: CAFGINZ enters the Comalco debate

In January 1975 two busloads of activists set off from Christchurch on a South Island-wide bus tour with the dual aim of familiarising themselves with the nature and extent of foreign control in New Zealand, and at the same time highlighting the issue amongst the general public along the way. Locations visited represented a wide variety of interests, including the Comalco smelter at Bluff, Manapouri and other proposed power schemes, the Southland Beech Scheme, the Mt Davy coalfield on the West Coast, and U.S. military bases at Hawewood/Weedons and Washdyke/Mt John.

The arrival of the two buses containing the Resistance Ride at Tiwai Point marked the beginning of CAFGINZ activism targeting the smelter. It still amuses Murray Horton that the smelter workers greeted protestors with “a great big banner saying ‘Piss off’” (Horton, 1975). While members of the Engineers Union have understandably opposed CAFCA’s call for the smelter to be closed, CAFCA “don’t like seeing any workers, New Zealand or otherwise, used as pawns in a cynical power struggle by an unscrupulous multinational” (‘Comalco’, 1985). To this end, CAFCA have opposed plans by the company to force smelter workers onto individual contracts and undermine union collective agreements at the smelter (‘Comalco’s Litany’, 1993; Lusk, 2001). I will discuss CAFCA’s relationships with trade unions further in Chapter 5.

As part of preparations for another visit by activists to Comalco in August 1976, CAFCA sought to hold a public debate in Christchurch on the merits of the Comalco agreement with the Government. However CAFGINZ was unable to find a suitable speaker who would defend the agreement. The Minister of Energy and Resources, Eric Holland declined, stating that “The National Party's attitude on this general topic is well-known and has been explained many times because of that and also because your organisation’s attitude is also well-known, I feel no good purpose would be served by my attendance”. CAFGINZ noted they received a very similar reply from the Public Affairs Manager of Comalco, Mervyn B. Bennett: “My company's views...are well known and do not need to be repeated. Therefore, because of your public and published attitudes, and because my company's views on your policies are well known, we feel that nothing positive could be gained from public debate” (‘Public Meeting on Comalco’, 1976). Instead, CAFGINZ held a public meeting, with a focus on education, in Christchurch on the 26 July 1976.

While it is possible that Comalco’s decision to decline CAFGINZ’s invitation was influenced by a desire not to undermine its own position in upcoming renegotiations with the government over

the price the smelter paid for power, this is unlikely. Comalco attempted to pre-empt these negotiations the same month by presenting its proposals to the government, which suggests Comalco would have been able to make public comment if they had so wished. I discuss these negotiations in detail in Chapter 7.

Lind's company history of Comalco also notes the visit of the CAFGINZ activists in August 1976 for the "second time", which perhaps suggests a mention of the Resistance Ride may have been cut from the book. Of the second visit Lind writes:

"the event had been interesting not from the fact the protestors burned the flags of Japan and the United States outside the smelter gates but that only two Southlanders had joined them. Awarua's MP Rex Austin, elected in 1975, rose in Parliament to speak about the abuse of the smelter from what he called a 'violent fringe element'" (Lind, 1996, p. 125).

Later that same year Comalco Limited published a pamphlet "The Manapouri development and Comalco agreement" (1976) where they attempted to answer the suggestion that Comalco was being supplied with electricity below cost. They also denied the price of electricity on the national grid or from sources other than Manapouri was relevant to the price payable by Comalco. While they did not mention CAFGINZ by name, they did respond to explicit claims made by CAFGINZ in the media.

22. How CAFCA developed their ideas

Following the success of the Resistance Ride, greater focus was placed on growing CAFGINZ as an organisation. At the first Annual General Meeting on 18 April 1976, the activists discussed an 'Aims and Goals' document that had been distributed prior to the meeting.

CAFGINZ is a broadly-based movement made up of people representing various political views. We are united in our opposition to foreign control and exploitation in New Zealand. Also, we have to oppose the role of local New Zealand agents and partners in this exploitation. To do this, our main task is educational, that is, to raise people's consciousness of how foreign control is not only economic control but also political, military and cultural influence. In exposing foreign exploitation we do not advocate a thoroughly worked out general alternative to foreign control. We feel this will develop from struggles and discussions of many more people than us. However, we may at times pose alternatives on certain issues, e.g. close down Comalco.

Our educational work results in a two-fold learning process. We teach others and they teach us from their experiences

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What does CAFGINZ stand for?

- 1. an independent NZ based on policies of economic, military and political self-reliance, using NZ's resources for the benefit of the NZ people, and refusing involvement with self-serving military and economic treaties of big foreign countries.*
- 2. Opposition to the exploitation of the New Zealand people's resources by foreign companies, and any foreign military activities in New Zealand.*

Anyone who supports these aims may be a member of CAFGINZ.

What CAFGINZ does not support!

While opposing foreign control, CAFGINZ does not support replacement of foreign monopolies with local ones. NZ monopolies are collaborating with foreign companies in the exploitation of their own country – their only loyalty is to profits. Nor does CAFGINZ support NZ monopolies exploiting other countries, e.g. NZ companies in the south Pacific region. CAFGINZ is not racist. It does not oppose the people of foreign countries, but the foreign monopolies which are exploiting New Zealanders. ('Aims and Goals', 1976)

While the general direction of opposition to foreign control was supported, the meeting also discussed the dangers of racism and national chauvinism creeping into CAFGINZ campaigns.

Comparing the key statements in this 'Aims and Goals' document with the current CAFCA charter demonstrates how resilient the core concepts have been. Minor modifications have been made to the charter over the years, and there have been many opportunities for issues to be revisited, at times leading to heated discussion amongst members. Most debates have concerned Article 6 of the Charter:

"CAFCA recognises that imperialism (foreign control) is a logical and inevitable product of capitalism. However, because we are not a political party and because of the diversity of views within CAFCA we define ourselves as anti-imperialist rather than actively anti-capitalist. But we campaign vigorously against our "own" TNCs, and against New Zealand Big Business which ruthlessly pushes the same domestic political agenda as the TNCs. We oppose the entire spectrum of New Right "reforms" being implemented to make the economy of Aotearoa "attractive" to foreign investors. (CAFCA Charter, 2008).

The fundamental decision to concentrate on foreign control instead of a general opposition to capitalism has been debated for as long as CAFCA have been around. While most members of the committee in the early days would have described themselves as anti-capitalist or socialist, some on the committee, including Bill Rosenberg, felt that there were many anti-capitalist groups around at the time and there was a danger of turning into yet another anti-capitalist

political party. Hence, the focus on foreign control was a way of seeking and maintaining independence from such groups, as well as making CAFCINZ potentially more attractive to a wider group of people.

Some socialists, such as Bill Rosenberg, also saw a focus on foreign control as strategic, as they did not believe “any progressive change – ranging from mildly progressive reform through to a socialist revolution...can in practice happen without national sovereignty.” (B. Rosenberg, 1995a). An example of the dangers is demonstrated by the 1938-9 exchange crisis. Despite New Zealand’s Labour Government being re-elected in 1938 with a healthy majority, the City of London and a conservative British Government refused to roll over historical New Zealand overseas debt. There were strong suggestions their real target was Labour’s proposed system of import controls and plans for a more generous welfare system (Sinclair, 1976; Sutch, 1966)¹⁵. The argument made by Rosenberg also related to a debate that was occurring within Marxism. Some Marxist theories posit a “two stage revolution” where a national democratic revolution needs to occur before a socialist revolution can be successful. Bertram (personal communication, 21 January 2016) notes “plenty of good strong Marxist arguments for developing your national capitalism as a stepping stone on which you can build a socialist order”. He also notes there was a great debate within the New Left between those influenced by Leon Trotsky and his concept of permanent revolution and the more cautious ones who recognised “if you want to have a problem on your hands then you take a lot of the world in its present state and try be socialist with it straight away, there are conditions, there are stages of how you make the transition through”.

This view was challenged by New Zealand representatives of the Trotskyist tradition. In 1975 the National Secretary of the Socialist Action League, Keith Locke (1976), questioned whether the left nationalist position outlined by CAFCINZ, Peter Lusk, Brian Easton and Wolfgang Rosenberg should be seen as progressive¹⁶. This view denied that foreign capital was worse than New Zealand capital, and claimed that while examples of national demands as part of revolutionary struggles in the underdeveloped world could be seen as a progressive force, nationalism could only be a reactionary force in the context of a developed capitalist country like

¹⁵ The onset of World War II most likely saved New Zealand from the onerous terms threatened by the British. On 5 September 1939 the British Government agreed to buy New Zealand’s entire exportable surplus of meat, which quickly improved New Zealand’s reserves of overseas exchange (Sinclair, 1976, p. 189).

¹⁶ It should be noted that Keith Locke’s views changed in later years. As a Green MP he advocated a position closer to that of CAFCA (K. Locke, personal communication, 2014). Another prominent SAL member, Paul Piesse later became a CAFCA committee member.

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New Zealand. The Christchurch branch of the Communist Party of New Zealand also raised this issue at CAFCINZ's earliest meetings, and the discussion continued on the long bus journeys during the Resistance Ride. Reflecting on this, a former member of the CPNZ suggested the debate over the merits of a two stage revolution were "clearer" in Christchurch, "because CAFCA was here, and we had brought these questions up for discussion." (D. Archer, personal communication, 4 May 2015)

Warren Brewer recalls an occasion where he suggested to his comrades in the Workers Institute for Scientific Socialist Education that the group should invite Murray Horton to Hamilton to speak. On facing "vehement opposition" on the grounds that Horton represented "bourgeois nationalist" politics, Brewer organised another Hamilton group to host the meeting. Yet on encountering Murray, one of Brewer's comrades, Bill Andersen, changed his mind, and even drove Murray to Auckland during his 1993 speaking tour (W. Brewer, personal communication, 13 October 2014; Horton, 2005a). Bill Andersen was also President of the National Distribution Union, which became one of CAFCA's strongest supporters in the trade union movement. Andersen would regularly ring CAFCA to seek information or for a discussion.

A name change was most seriously considered in 1985, when CAFCINZ sought feedback from members in preparation for a debate and vote at the 1986 AGM. The shortlist included 'Aotearoa Independence Movement' (AIM) and 'Campaign for an Independent Aotearoa' (CIA) ('Name Change', 1985). Despite the potential in an amusing acronym in the latter, the idea of foreign control providing a focus for the organisation prevailed with the AGM showing a clear preference for 'Campaign Against Foreign Control of Aotearoa' (CAFCA) ('Our New Name', 1986). Most other peace and justice groups similarly adopted 'Aotearoa' at the time to recognise the growing recognition of the place of Maori in New Zealand (Leadbeater, 2014). This also led some activists to call on CAFCA to devote more attention to the Treaty of Waitangi and the impact of colonisation on Maori and how this linked to 'foreign control'.

When CAFCA revised its charter in 1987, debate over Article 6 became a key focus. Some members wanted CAFCA to declare its active opposition to capitalism on the ground that foreign control flows inevitably from capitalism. A similar proposal was also debated in 1990 and the committee found itself unable to agree on this issue, leading CAFCA to seek feedback from members ('Charter', 1990). Yet on both occasions the status quo prevailed. While this may demonstrate the resilience of CAFCA's ideas, it could also suggest a resistance to change within the organisation, an issue to be examined in other contexts in the next chapter.

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The notion of ‘foreign control’ can be misunderstood by the general public, particularly when it is used in an economic as opposed to a military sense. At times the use of ‘foreign’ in the name of the organisation can be an encumbrance to the organisation delivering its message, as its spokespeople sometimes need to begin by clarifying they are not opposed to foreign people, but to foreign corporations. In terms of accusations of racism or prejudice, often it is the headlines that get CAFCA into trouble rather than the substantive message. In her oral history of German immigration to New Zealand Brigitte Bönisch-Brednich takes exception to CAFCA’s booklet ‘Bloodless Blitzkrieg’ (1980), using it as example of the “deep distrust of Germany as the epitome of a war enemy..[that is] still discussed with an intensity that can seem oppressive to Germans” (Bönisch-Brednich, 2002, p. 345)¹⁷. It is striking that Bönisch-Brednich does not appear to realise that CAFCA itself is a product of second generation German immigration¹⁸, and, like her, is also critical of the dominant historical narrative around ANZAC Day that is promoted by the likes of the Returned Services Association. In 1996 CAFCA did admit that the publication “did trade shamelessly on WWII stereotypes” with its title and accompanying cartoons (‘German Investment in New Zealand’, 1996).

Following the announcement of recommendations from a review of the Overseas Investment Act in July 2004, Finance Minister and Deputy Prime Minister Michael Cullen reportedly told a journalist that CAFCA were “a one-man band bordering on xenophobia” (Horton, 2004d). On being asked to respond to Cullen’s statement, Horton’s response was to laugh and say “at least he could have called us a two-man band” (op. cit.). Rather than a serious accusation, perhaps Cullen’s quip should be seen as part of the cut and thrust of political debate, even perhaps an attempt to marginalise CAFCA, as other commentators, including those who are critical of CAFCA’s political stance, did not see CAFCA as “particularly xenophobic” or “in any way prejudiced”. “I think CAFCA’s outrage, venom and views of investors has been pretty widely spread”¹⁹. While he cannot remember the details of the document, Bill Rosenberg recalls a statement from a government publication or official who noted that opposition to foreign investment in New Zealand, had never taken the same race-based form seen in other countries (B. Rosenberg, personal communication, 20 January 2016). While CAFCA was not mentioned

¹⁷ The term predates World War II. There is a suggestion it was coined by George I of England, originally a German prince, in relation to a 17th century scandal where the lover of George’s wife was murdered, apparently to stop an elopement (Rescher, 1999).

¹⁸ In regards to the possible German or central European influence on shaping the public intellectual role undertaken by Wolfgang Rosenberg and CAFCA, it is interesting that another prominent public intellectual in New Zealand, Nicky Hagar, is also a product of second generation Austrian immigration.

¹⁹ Author interview.

by name, Bill took this as a reflection on the work of the group. Issues relating to the marginalisation of CAFCA as a group and the potential for an internal overreliance on individuals will be examined in the next chapter.

The stance taken by the politician Winston Peters during the 1996 election campaign is a prominent example where opposition to foreign investment could be seen as taking a race-based form. Peters called for a significant reduction in immigration and saw a significant lift in public support. Despite working with Peters' New Zealand First Party in opposing the Overseas Investment Bill the year before (see chapter 5), CAFCA strongly opposed the attempt by Peters to link opposition to foreign investment with immigration (Horton, 1996b). While committee members have acknowledged that addressing these issues in a more incendiary way may be effective politically, by gaining greater public exposure and applying greater pressure on a government to take action, CAFCA do not have any regrets in avoiding this path. Bill Rosenberg (personal communication, 20 January 2016) commented "it's just an appalling way to address these kind of issues and it is wrong anyway". CAFCA are aware they may have members who were members "for reasons that were more racist than political or principled ones", with questions popping up at public meetings and such like. In these cases, CAFCA have made it clear these views are not shared by the organisation. There have been also occasional issues within the CAFCA committee where the leadership "made it clear to the committee member that wasn't the viewpoint we were going to take" (op. cit).

CAFCA's caution about these issues may have cost the group some opportunities. For the past decade the affordability of residential housing has been one of the most prominent foreign control issues in New Zealand. Between 2010 and 2016 New Zealand's price-to-income ratio increased by 37%, representing one the highest increases in the OCED over that time (International Monetary Fund, 2016; Ninness, 2016). In 2013 the Labour party adopted a policy of banning non-residents from purchasing existing houses (Shearer, 2013). Yet the dangers of these debates were demonstrated in 2015 when Labour released housing research based on 'Chinese sounding names' and were accused of racism (Trevett, 2015). CAFCA declined to become involved in the housing affordability debate, as they believed it had more to do with immigration than foreign control, and represented a small part of a bigger picture (Horton, 2020a). Yet there are foreign control aspects of the housing affordability debate that do not concern immigration. One commentator, Greg Ninnes (2018) argued that capital outflows from China may have had a bigger impact on Auckland's housing market than low interest rates and

high immigration. Ninnes noted how the market cooled in mid-2016 when the Chinese government restricted foreign outflows.

23. Concluding thoughts on CAFCA's beginnings

The early 1970s saw a growing interest in imperialism as a concept in political economy (Barratt Brown, 1974). In this context, as Bill Rosenberg identifies Sutch as a key intellectual inspiration for the formation of CAFCINZ, Sutch's book *Takeover New Zealand* (1972) was recommended reading for participants on the Resistance Ride. While Geoff Bertram believed CAFCA and Sutch fit "together partly", he noted that Sutch had a wider political agenda than CAFCA. For Bertram, the economics of American economist Paul Baran (1957), as described in the work "The Political Economy of Growth" are a closer match to CAFCA.

"...it was really an anti-imperialist book but it was written by a serious economist. It laid down groundwork that economists can live with and work with quite happily and it focused on the character of the national bourgeois in a capitalist development process and argued that if your national bourgeois held to a nationalist line, resisting foreign incursion and foreign control and proceeded to build a national capitalism you got a stronger growth path than you got if you bourgeois was a comprador one, sold out to the transnationals and the overseas interests. The entire book is built around the question of who appropriates the surplus from economic activity, are they local or are they national or are they external, foreign, and Paul Baran's book was a very strong call for the building of national capitalism." (G. Bertram, personal communication, 21 January 2016)

Like CAFCA, Baran also discusses the relevance of military power and the implied ability of states to intervene on behalf of the interests of "their" foreign investors. The focus on monopolies in the early 'Aims and Goals' document may also indicate an indirect influence of Baran. But it should be noted that CAFCA did not share Baran's or Wolfgang Rosenberg's more sympathetic attitudes to the 'Communist bloc' countries during the Cold war era. In February 1977 CAFCINZ picketed a Soviet fishing boat to demonstrate against the incursion of Soviet fishing vessels into New Zealand waters and the "plundering" of our fishing resources ('Russian Vessel Picketed', 1977; Horton, 2009a). This action confused the SIS, who had wrongly assumed CAFCINZ were 'fellow travellers' of the Soviet Union. The SIS even reported that comments in the newspapers suggested CAFCINZ "would no doubt have the unanimous support of all New Zealanders in their protest."(*NZSIS Memo: Protest against Russian Fishing Fleet*, 1977).

While Sutch's ideas did not become mainstream, the relative success of New Zealand under a protected economy from the late 1930s did help to create a constituency for the ideas that were later advocated by CAFGINZ/CAFCA. In doing so CAFCA tapped into a current of unease about foreign control that had existed from the early days of New Zealand as a British colony, and gained a political space to operate.

Writing in *New Zealand Monthly Review* in July 1975, a young economist, Brian Easton, approvingly noted the existence of a tradition in opposition to the conventional economic wisdom of neoclassicism.

“Fortunately New Zealanders such as W. Rosenberg, W. B. Sutch and J. Lewin have pointed out there is an alternative. Equally fortunately younger New Zealanders have continued their tradition. The next five years perhaps offers their greatest chance of successfully redirecting the development of New Zealand. For all our futures let us hope the chance is seized” (Easton, 1975, p. 13)²⁰

It should be pointed out that in 1975 the advocates of economic nationalism in New Zealand were not just backward looking. In an attempt to address a “retardation of economic thought in New Zealand” and the “bankruptcy of world economic theory to diagnose and prescribe for the malaise, long-rooted, but taking hold alarmingly of the world economy and our own since 1968”, Jack Lewin (1975) advocated a significant redesign of New Zealand's economic institutions that consciously regulated the market. He believed existing institutions “of almost all kinds” were out of date and “too much owned by foreigners”. Lewin called for a distinct New Zealand nation with “effective control and ownership over land, natural and industrial resources; and friendly, outgoing but not selling out, nor knuckling under to any nation or nations” (Lewin, 1975, p. 2).

The connection between nationhood and the relationship of New Zealand to the global economy was also examined by Bruce Jesson from 1974 onward. A few months before his untimely death in 1999, Jesson (1999b) wrote that “the need for a New Zealand nationalism was a logical need, rather than a felt need. More than anything it is an economic need bought on by the stresses of globalisation”.

At its formation CAFGINZ attracted the more serious activists in the New Left movements of the time, and some found that their former comrades in the PYM were not as interested in holding meetings and finding out the facts. Horton presumed the PYM were always going to have a

²⁰ While Easton(2020) maintains nationalism can have positive aspects, he now appears to have modified his stance towards globalisation, see discussion in Chapter 2.

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short life, seeing it as very much a protest group: “It was also a lifestyle thing, the whole ‘60s sort of stuff, whereas CAFCINZ was not....Sex, drugs and rock and roll...did not feature in the CAFCINZ agenda” (M. Horton, personal communication, 22 December 2014). Although as late as June 1979 CAFCINZ still referred to themselves as primarily an activist rather than a research organisation (‘ANZAC Day Protest’, 1979). This ying-yang continued throughout CAFCA’s life. In placing a greater emphasis on economics, it could be argued that CAFCINZ became more like an ‘old left’ organisation at the time, though it retained an interest in environmental issues. It would be interesting to speculate as to whether this shift later influenced differences with organisations that placed a greater emphasis on gender and race. While Boraman (2002, p. 129) describes the Resistance Ride as one of the last large-scale protests organised by the New Left in New Zealand, this does not imply that CAFCA should be automatically considered a New Left organisation. Indeed it could be argued that following the ride CAFCA found a place for itself amongst older left wing traditions in Christchurch centred around publishing and an emphasis on class.

This chapter has offered a brief historical account of the emergence in New Zealand of CAFCA as a political CSO. It has highlighted the “bounded” nature of CAFCA’s self-defined focus, a feature to which I return in my discussion of CAFCA’s longevity. It has also described regional factors in its emergence, and the role of particular political traditions and personnel in its formation. The Comalco case-study has been introduced.

In Chapter 5 I identify the reasons for CAFCA’s durability as an organisation, despite significant changes in the political and economic environment over this time. A lot of this came down to the steely determination, experience and ability of its key activists. Not even a major earthquake could rattle them.

Chapter 5: Why Did CAFCA Survive?

In this chapter I will examine the reasons why the Campaign Against Foreign Control in Aotearoa (CAFCA) survived as an organisation despite a climate of ideological closure imposed by the growing influence of neoliberal economic ideas and related models of globalisation. In the New Zealand case, and perhaps worldwide, it is rare for an activist organisation with a focus on political economy to last for over 40 years, let alone one that has lasted through three distinct periods, from the tail end of the Keynesian era (1975-1984), through a period of significant neoliberal economic reform (1984-1999), and the period following these reforms (1999 onwards).

In the previous chapter I described how CAFCA found a political space to operate as part of a New Zealand tradition of progressive nationalism, a tradition that was noticeably strong in Christchurch. As we shall see, the existence of this sympathetic constituency for CAFCA's message is one reason for the longevity of the organisation.

CAFCA provides an interesting example in which to look at the role of individuals within an organisation operating in a smaller society. In this chapter I will discuss some features of longevity, describing how a group of capable and colourful individuals, in a sense contingently formed, founded and sustained the organisation. I will examine the nature of this leadership and ask whether CAFCA became too reliant on the dedication and continued presence of its key activists. I will explain the funding model which has allowed CAFCA to employ a full time organiser after 1991. This has allowed CAFCA to extend its reach outside its Christchurch base without the need for regional branches. Longevity can also make it more difficult for organisations to grow and change, so I will also assess CAFCA's ability to apply its analytical abilities to its own operations. I examine CAFCA's media presence, as the survival and effectiveness of a small CSO can be dependent on its ability to maintain a presence in the mainstream media, despite changes in the political and economic context. As the 1970s and 1980s saw growing recognition of the place of Maori in New Zealand I will describe how a Pakeha organisation improved its relationships with Maori and how this led to questions as to how an organisation opposed to 'foreign control' could address issues relating to Maori sovereignty and the ongoing impacts of colonisation.

I then return to the question as to the impact of neoliberal ideological closure, and explain why CAFCA survived despite many other groups and individuals losing their previous influence. I

begin with a story which demonstrates the dedication of CAFCA's people and the resilience of the organisation.

24. A vignette of longevity and dedication

A violent shaking rocked Christchurch on the 22 February 2011. It was one of the most significant and devastating earthquakes in New Zealand history. While there was a focus on the damaged buildings and physical infrastructure, the aftermath of the earthquake also led to significant changes in the social and political infrastructure of the city.

While CAFCA cancelled their scheduled fortnightly committee that night, at the urging of committee members the meeting was reconvened a week later in Murray Horton's dining room. Electricity had just been restored. Once the meeting was underway there was a bang on the door. CAFCA Secretary/Organiser Murray Horton found "it was some bloody Red Cross woman", asking if there any elderly people at the address. Murray told her they were in a meeting. The phone went. The mobile went. Murray replied "What? I am in a meeting". The woman on the other end of the phone, "from EQC or something or Fletchers" had called to check how people were getting on (M. Horton, personal communication, 22 December 2014). All usual committee members were in attendance, even though some faced potential difficulties travelling from Lyttelton Harbour into Christchurch and lacked running water at home.

This is a telling vignette capturing some of the reasons why CAFCA remains one of New Zealand's most long-running political organisations, celebrating its 47th anniversary in 2021. When interview participants were asked why they thought CAFCA had survived so long, many highlighted the energy, skills and dedication of its core people. Mary Ellen O'Connor highlighted the need for an almost supernatural stamina, "as Murray has", and the dedication of Bill Rosenberg "to do that political and economic analysis the whole way, you got to have a commitment beyond the normal when you are not winning, truly, just to keep going and keep going and keep bloody going" (M. E. O'Connor, personal communication, 16 May 2015). Warren Brewer believes CAFCA survived due to the "simple dedication" of its Secretary Organiser (W. Brewer, personal communication, 13 October 2014). The dedication of CAFCA's key activists was even a matter of comment in a then secret internal New Zealand Security Intelligence (SIS) memorandum in July 1976. Referring to an article in *Foreign Control Watchdog* the unnamed informant said: "The report on CAFKINZ research seminar is an interesting illustration of the length to which dedicated people will go" (*NZSIS Memorandum:*

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CAFCINZ, 1976). In a cover letter to CAFCA releasing its file on the organisation in 2008 the SIS Director, Warren Tucker, made the following comment.

“The passage of time has shown however that CAFCINZ’s wider appeal (over CAFMANZ) to popular suspicion about the intentions of overseas business interests in New Zealand rather than just to the left-wing causes of the day, has ensured your organizations longevity. In any case, it is a new experience for me to be writing, as the Director of one still flourishing organisation, to the Secretary of another – which is noteworthy from our perspective as the only one that called for the liquidation of the NZSIS that has not joined the others dedicated to that cause on (to use the late V.I. Lenin’s term), ‘the rubbish heap of history!’” (W. Tucker, personal communication, 30 October 2008)

Some participants highlighted CAFCA’s longevity as amongst its greatest successes. Many of those working in left wing organisations are all too aware of their often fleeting, temporary nature. Horton (1991) highlights how longevity can build credibility. “Our strength is the resources we have, the contacts we've built up and our sheer stamina. You build up a credibility just by keeping going. You don't want to be just a flash in the bloody pan, to come, make a noise and then disappear. There are plenty of organisations like that”. The longevity of CAFCA’s major publication *Foreign Control Watchdog* is also a source of credibility, with many participants highlighting its position as the longest running left wing political journal in New Zealand, outliving many “hundreds” over the years. As the Auckland meeting on Murray Horton’s 2014 speaking tour was coming to a close, journalist Chris Trotter held a copy of *Watchdog* aloft and announced “20 years ago there were half a dozen publications like this. Now it’s the last one left” (Horton, 2015a). A similar point was also noted by Bradford (2014). For a journal of the left to last for more than 40 years in a New Zealand context is a very significant achievement. For example, Perry Anderson (2000) provides a useful international comparison when he describes the then 40 years of the *New Left Review* as “a significant span of activity, though not an extraordinary one”.

25. Role of individuals and nature of leadership

As the more serious activists in new left movements such as the PYM and CAFMANZ identified each other, CAFCINZ became a vehicle for such individuals to pursue their political, research and writing interests. This included Owen Wilkes, Murray Horton, Bill Rosenberg and Peter Lusk. The group possessed considerable talents in these areas right from the get go. All could be described as intelligent, analytical, articulate, capable writers with a notable dose of perseverance. Many of these personal strengths and skills became identified as strengths of the

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organisation they founded. As discussed in the previous chapter, the formation of CAFGINZ may have been assisted by aspects of Christchurch political and intellectual culture and its tendency to tolerate its more colourful characters. A number of CAFGINZ's key activists could meet this description. It is also possible that the formation of CAFGINZ allowed such activists to avoid being marginalised at the individual level.

CAFCA could be described as a set of powerful individuals with specific skills. While some participants agreed this was a useful description, others questioned whether powerful was the right word. Powerful can describe strength and ability; it can also describe having power over others, and in this case the influence of individuals within an organisation.

The presence of such people within an organisation can make others feel intimidated. A former committee member reports: "They have been very forceful members, especially Murray, but I mean he always argued any case with good reason, and he had a lot more information, which he shared with the rest of the members to back up his point of view. The same with Bill too of course"²¹. Another former committee member, Warren Brewer, described Murray as a "formidable personality" and acknowledged he could be difficult to work with, noting that he sometimes spoke to people "pretty gruffly" (W. Brewer, personal communication, 13 October 2014).

Nevertheless, these factors led to activists outside the key group feeling undervalued and not appreciated. If other committee members questioned something, "someone like Murray" can "put you right" or will amplify the statement with "a whole lot of knowledge you don't have...but as I say I got used to that but committee members found it difficult over the years"²².

During the 1980s and 1990s, the personal appearance of the ABC Committee led to them being known in jest as the 'Bearded Patriarchs', in the biblical sense. Some have also applied this description to members of the CAFCA Committee, including the Secretary, who signed off an article as "Murray Horton, BP" (Horton, 1993a). In his obituary of Owen Wilkes, Murray described Owen's look:

"For virtually all of my life as a political activist, he had been there like a rock and always looking exactly the same – big, strong, bearded, shorts (usually leather), quite often bare chested, sandals or bare feet. He looked like an Old Testament prophet." (Horton, 2005c)

²¹ Author interview

²² Author interview

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While it was not meant as such, it is fair to say that this description may have resonated with a number of female activists who have faced difficulties organising in and around CAFCA. Leigh Cookson (personal communication, 5 May 2015) described CAFCA as “an intensely male dominated and male focused organisation.” Part of this may stem from the tendency of key CAFCA activists to be very task orientated, which can mean there is less emphasis on the maintenance of relationships, both within the group and with other activists outside CAFCA. While CAFCA’s relationships with other groups will be examined in another section, in terms of the interpersonal factor it is worth noting a comment from Cookson (personal communication, 5 May 2015) that CAFCA acts as its own entity, “it does its own thing”, so “relationships are only really maintained when other people maintain them”. More often than not, it is likely that the job of relationship management fell to female activists in particular, though Bill Rosenberg also had an important influence on these matters over the years.

Due to security concerns, it was common until the late 1980s for *Watchdog* articles not to carry the name of the author, and there were less detailed accounts of meetings. The lack of written records creates a danger that the contribution of female activists to CAFCA in the early years may be underestimated. When Murray came to write the obituary of Lyn Burke (Horton, 2013a), he found that the best record of her involvement with the group were the files collated by the SIS. Taking on the role of Chairperson and Treasurer at the 1978 AGM, Burke impressed the SIS ‘source’ who noted she “summarised discussion well, and maintained good control of the meeting, which was, however conducted on an informal basis throughout.” Bill Rosenberg remembered Burke as “a quiet, self-effacing but determined and reliable activist who kept at it and always played a strong and practical role. I had a lot of respect for her.” (Horton, 2013a). Burke worked at Caxton Press, a Christchurch institution that grew out of the Bloomsbury South movement.

Another notable woman in the life of early CAFCINZ was Christine Bird, a founding member who became CAFCA chairperson in the 1980s (Horton, 2013a). Bird was also Horton’s partner for most of this time, and moved to Australia in 1987 following the end of the relationship. As Chairperson she was a key voice in advocating for CAFCINZ to adopt ‘Aotearoa’ as part of its identity in 1986. Horton later married Filipino activist Becky Roque, who played a central role in teaching her self-described ‘luddite’ husband to use a computer in 1991 (Horton, 1993b). She also stepped into the breach to lend CAFCA her skills on a number of occasions, from helping with layout to bookkeeping and bookbinding.

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While GATT Watchdog activist Leigh Cookson made a point of never formally joining CAFCA, from the late 1990s to 2021 Leigh performed the essential role of layout editor for *Watchdog* for a nominal amount, even though she told CAFCA not to pay her. Other women who have served on the committee include Ann Currie, Liz Griffiths, Terry Moon and Lana Le Quesne. It is notable that all of these activists, among other roles, served as Treasurer, which is often among the less popular jobs in activist organisations. During her time on the committee, Lynda Boyd acted as a link with the union movement, as she was working as a union organiser at the time. A number of women have also contributed articles to *Watchdog*, and made significant contributions to the Roger Award, and this appears to have increased over the years. But a writer for CAFCA is likely to have a greater sense of distance with CAFCA as an organisation than someone serving on the committee, and this may lead to differences on how activists perceived their experiences.

Owen Wilkes was another powerful CAFCA personality. A decade older than the majority of the other key activists, Wilkes became an important ‘father figure’. While his specific research interests meant that he was not actively involved in organising CAFCA on a day-to-day basis, apart from some specific activities, he remained an important mentor and resource for CAFCA activists. In June 1976 he led a seminar on research techniques hosted by CAFCINZ (‘Research Seminar’, 1976). One activist said he “made sure we..kept the intellectual thing pretty rigorous” (T. Currie, personal communication, 4 May 2015). His strong work ethic and emphasis on finding out the facts can now be seen as a significant influence on CAFCA as an organisation.

Despite never holding any academic qualifications, Wilkes gained an international reputation as a formidable researcher, particularly on the subject of military bases. In 1976 he moved to Scandinavia to work as a full time peace researcher, most notably for the Stockholm International Peace Institute. In 1981 he faced charges under Sweden’s Official Secrets Act. Following a trial that gained international press attention, Wilkes was expelled from Sweden and returned to New Zealand in 1982. CAFCINZ then sent him around the country on a well-attended speaking tour (‘Owen Wilkes Admits He Was Wrong about Omega’, 1982).

Peter Lusk describes Wilkes as “such a genius”, and was in awe of a mind that could just “pore over all this information and come up with answers. He was very good at analysing what was happening and absolute master at digging out information to back up his conclusions” (P. Lusk, personal communication, 3 May 2015). Another activist described Owen as “one of the most amazing people I have met in my life, he was just an amazing character. We’re so lucky to have him, I just felt, he was doing the research, he was coming up with all this stuff, he was just a

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league of his own, and we were kind of just backing him up basically” (T. Currie, personal communication, 4 May 2015). Horton (2005c) described Wilkes as “the most astonishing researcher that I’ve ever met”.

Yet Wilkes could also be a difficult character to deal with. Friends and family described him as a fierce individualist with a total inability to compromise (Horton, 2005c). Wilkes retired from the peace movement in 1992, and became highly critical of his former comrades who were still active (he was also critical of CAFCA, see conclusion). Horton (2005c) described Wilkes at this time as “burnt out and disillusioned, and had become embroiled in various personality disputes (the peace movement can be decidedly unpeaceful at times). Owen could be a very prickly character (I write here from personal experience) and had a lifelong history of disputes, in both his personal and public lives” (op. cit). After no personal contact for around eight years, Horton and Wilkes reconciled when Horton visited Hamilton during his 2002 speaking tour.

While most of Horton’s writing is comprised of social and political analysis of existing sources, Bill Rosenberg’s technical and mathematical skills allow him to contribute original research of a more in-depth nature, particularly concerning CAFCA’s focus on foreign investment and foreign control. In the preparation for the resistance ride in 1974, Bill researched the relevant companies and their interlocking directorships. This research formed the basis of ‘little talks’ in the bus as the group made their journey. Bill has acted as the chief theoretician for CAFCA, most responsible for outlining their version of a progressive nationalism in New Zealand. He also led CAFCA’s formal lobbying work to local and central government, writing detailed submissions concerning the Overseas Investment Act, trade/investment agreements, Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) and the electricity industry. Most notably, Bill wrote a 58 page detailed submission for the 2005 Overseas Investment Review²³, which became a significant reference point for ongoing CAFCA work, even over a decade later (C. Hutching, 2018). Work on submissions, in a shortened form, also appeared as opinion pieces in various newspapers (examples include B. Rosenberg, 1997b, 2001b, 2004a, 2010). Murray recalls that one well-known investigative journalist described Bill as the best economic journalist in the country. Others have also contributed in-depth original research for CAFCA over the years, most notably Peter Lusk and John Christie concerning Comalco.

In his role of primary spokesperson Murray provides CAFCA with a different type of intellectual leadership, focusing on media relations and campaigning. This often involves translating

²³ See next chapter.

complex issues into a language and presentation to be understood by a wider audience. He is also a very skilled storyteller, aided by a remarkable memory described by many as “photographic”. Murray is often able to give a 30-year history of a company off the top of his head, including its machinations of its foreign ownership and how it has treated its local workers and the environment. Other participants highlighted Murray’s sense of humour as another key strength. Humour is also a key part of Murray’s personal charm. It is as if Murray sometimes plays the character of the great man, but uses self-depreciating humour to reassure that he is not being entirely serious. Tony Currie compares Murray’s humour to that of former Australian Prime Minister Gough Whitlam (T. Currie, personal communication, 4 May 2015). Murray’s humour, photographic memory and story-telling skills are in themselves a powerful resource for the organisation. These attributes are most clearly expressed in *Watchdog*, which a reader, Noeline Gannaway described as “unique in political comment, being incisive, forthright, suitability disrespectful and witty.” (Horton, 2002c).

While Murray (Horton, 2001) has joked Bill is the “respectable” voice of CAFCA, this is an acknowledgement of their differing styles of speaking and writing. While Bill describes Murray as “quite effective” in gaining interest from the media and supporters on the left, he notes that moderate to conservative people do not warm to Murray in the same way. In contrast, Bill presents ideas and information for “broader political appeal, not being too polarising other than in the way we wanted it to be polarising” (B. Rosenberg, personal communication, 20 January 2016).

26. Dependence on individuals

When an organisation comes to rely on the skills of its individual leaders, there is a danger of the organisation becoming overly reliant on the presence of such individuals.

While Murray is now the central player in CAFCA, this always wasn’t the case. For more than a year between mid-1975 and late 1976 Murray lived in Sydney and had minimal involvement in CAFCINZ activities (Horton, 2007b). Key activists during Murray’s absence were Peter Lusk, Bill Rosenberg, Owen Wilkes and John Christie. The 1977 AGM appointed Rosenberg and Christie as joint editors of *Watchdog*, while Lyn Burke took over from Bill Rosenberg as Chairperson (‘CAFCINZ AGM’, 1977). Murray spent a number of months from May 1978 travelling, and became Secretary of CAFCINZ on his return (*NZSIS Memorandum: CAFCINZ AGM*, 1978). Murray began to play a greater role following the sudden departure of Wilkes to Norway in 1976, Lusk joining the New Zealand Communist Party in 1978 and Lyn Burke

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moving overseas in 1981. Murray took the role of Chairperson in 1979, reverting to his role of Secretary the following year – a position Murray has held ever since.

In December 1991, Murray became the full time Secretary/Organiser for CAFCA and ABC, with a wage funded through regular donations from supporters. These donations are kept in a separate ‘organiser account’ held separately from CAFCA funds (Murray, 1992), sustaining the job Murray does to this day. As one participant observed: “Obviously people have cared enough over those years to pay Murray’s wage, and that shows confidence in him and what he is doing, and I think that is why it [has continued]. These are things [that are] nothing to do with the actual issue he is dealing with, it’s to do with the quality of his work and his obvious dedication to it and his honesty around it” (C. Dann, personal communication, 20 December 2014). Yet the domination of any organisation by a single individual, no matter how dedicated, charismatic, and capable can create problems, particularly when that individual is no longer available. While Warren Brewer saw Murray’s personal loyalty as a good thing, he also highlighted that this could become a weakness: “I mean all power to the man for winning that kind of confidence, but he has got to build that confidence into the organisation for the organisation to continue beyond his absence” (W. Brewer, personal communication, 13 October 2014).

Murray acknowledges there are a number of factors that are tied to his personal situation which would make it more difficult for a new organiser to succeed him. As Murray has been willing to work from home, CAFCA have been spared the ongoing costs of renting an office, which can overwhelm the resource base of a small organisation. A freehold house has also allowed Murray to work for the equivalent of the minimum wage for most of this time as the organiser. That said, the sustainability of the funding model was put into question was in 1993 when Murray found the money was not enough to live on. After receiving the unemployment benefit for five weeks, a former committee member working at the Labour Department arranged for Murray to be supported for a year through an employment scheme called Task Force Green²⁴. The Task Force Green money represents the only time CAFCA have used any kind of government funds. While Murray’s wage has been increased to \$21.15 an hour in recent years with CAFCA making a commitment to the living wage movement, this still represents a wage below what many other people would be able or willing to live on. As Murray notes this does not mean that a change of organiser would be impossible; however it does highlight there would need to be changes in

²⁴ The same scheme was also used by CAFCA to fund the publication of two books, ‘Clearcut’ by Murray Horton and ‘The Cost of Free Trade’ by Dennis Small.

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order to allow this to happen. I will return to this issue in the conclusion where I will consider the future of CAFCA.

Unlike most other left wing organisations CAFCA have significant financial resources, in addition to the funds that sustain the organiser account. For the past five years CAFCA has maintained around \$50,000 in reserve, even though membership has only averaged around 450. This is in contrast to earlier years. For example, in November 1980, CAFCINZ, in association with Clutha Action, International Committee for Justice and Development and the Canterbury University Progressive Club published a booklet about West German investment in New Zealand, *Bloodless Blitzkrieg* ('Notices', 1981)²⁵. CAFCINZ financed this booklet by seeking loans and donations from members (Horton, 1980a). The high level of financial security CAFCA now enjoys means that it can concentrate on core business without having to devote energy and resources for ongoing fundraising. Nor are they dependent on government or charitable funds, which can be a source of instability for other organisations when these sources of funds dry up. Given that CAFCA scrutinises the actions of many rich and powerful people and businesses, it is also prudent to keep a rainy day fund in the event the targets of CAFCA's ire threaten legal action. In such a situation CAFCA would be able to call on its members and supporters for assistance, demonstrating that CAFCA's potential financial resources are even more significant than the money they might have in the bank. As Geoff Bertram (personal communication, 21 January 2016) notes, "CAFCA has huge goodwill and that won't be on the books, but that will be the basis on which they will survive if they were ever pushed against a wall."

Participants had difficulty identifying other political organisations with a funding model close to CAFCA. Perhaps the closest example was provided by the Campaign for Open Government (COG), a similar research based political CSO based in Wellington. While initially formed in 1979 to oppose the 'Think Big' policies of the Muldoon National Government, COG adopted a wider role seeking to improve public access to government information, and became a key actor in leading the Muldoon Government to pass the Official Information Act in 1982. COG employed three paid workers in the early 1980s (R. J. Barker, 1982, 1983).

Unpaid volunteers have also made an essential contribution to CAFCA. Given the centrality of Bill Rosenberg to the operation and output of CAFCA from the very beginning, his move to Wellington in 2009 was an important juncture in the history of the organisation. Not only could he no longer attend fortnightly committee meetings in person, but his senior role at the NZCTU

²⁵ *Bloodless Blitzkrieg* is cited by Tony Simpson (1984)

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meant that he had to take a significant step back from his CAFCA commitments. Bill stayed on the CAFCA committee as a ‘distance’ member, until officially standing down in 2017.

While CAFCA survived this change, Bill possessed skills that were always going to be difficult, perhaps impossible, to replace. Commenting on this change, one participant suggested the “depth of research isn’t there, without Bill.” (L. Cookson, personal communication, 5 May 2015) Most of CAFCA’s lobbying work ceased following Bill’s move. The only other submission available on CAFCA’s website after 2005 was a two-page submission by Murray on the Overseas Investment Act Reform Bill in 2019. While Bill was only able to contribute one article specifically written for *Watchdog* in the first four years since the move to Wellington, he still regularly appeared in *Watchdog* on the basis of work on trade and investment he had submitted elsewhere (Horton, 2013b). Bill’s new role also meant he could no longer be CAFCA’s second, contrasting voice in the media. That said, CAFCA did reassign some roles successfully, with James Ayers taking over the analysis of the monthly Overseas Investment Office decisions in 2009, and Chris Oakley taking over as CAFCA webmaster in 2014, with both these roles taken up by new people again in 2017 (Horton, 2018). Bill had performed both jobs for CAFCA for 20 years (Horton, 2009d, 2014b). Despite offering no pay, CAFCA were also able to recruit a number of new writers, including well-known names, a success Murray attributes to *Watchdog* being the sole survivor of the “old school Left publications.” (Horton, 2015a)

All CSOs tend to face a dilemma when their operations become dependent on the work ethic and skills of particular individuals, and such issues are likely to be magnified in a small society like New Zealand. But even in the case of the UK, Anderson (2000) acknowledges it is common for the vitality of a journal to be “tied to those who create it”, noting that political journals have a specific challenge. For political journals that aim to uphold certain objective principles and the capacity of such principles to make sense of the world, Anderson argues that such journals “must aim to extend their real life beyond the conditions or generations that gave rise to them”, in order to be true to themselves.

27. Growth, change and the question of branches

While CAFCA’s longevity is one of its greatest successes, longevity can create a risk of lack of growth or change within the organisation, tactics and strategy. While the founders of CAFCA in 1974 were not envisioning the group to last 40 years, it is noteworthy how COG addressed the issue of its ongoing existence following its initial campaign against the National Development

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Bill. While COG's core activists saw themselves as an effective group who enjoyed working together,

“it was agreed that we did not want the organisation to go on forever. We had a specific job to do and we did not want to have an organisation that became arthritic and more concerned with its own survival than with the job to be done. We also wanted to maintain the simple structure that we had patched together. A permanent institution would require a more formal structure.” (K. Johnston, 1984)

COG then resolved to exist for five years, an undertaking which they kept to, disbanding in 1984.

Some participants saw little growth or change within CAFCA: “It's kinda been in the same holding pattern for quite a while” (C. Dann, personal communication, 20 December 2014). Some had grown frustrated at suggesting anything as they felt nothing would change²⁶. Another factor was Murray Horton's way of working....once he did something it became a habit and “he keeps things going”. Others suggested CAFCA might not need to grow as it was already doing the job: “They were not setting out to be a mass organisation they were setting out to be an effective hard hitting ginger group that relied on information and research to direct policy ideas.” (G. Bertram, personal communication, 21 January 2016)

Yet it was also true that CAFCA's survival was aided by a capacity for critical self-reflection and renewal. While Murray's regular ‘organisers reports’ do provide a public summary of CAFCA's activities and discuss what went well and what did not go so well over a year, these reports are primarily a report to members in the past tense. More significant are the private ‘strategy’ meetings held by the CAFCA committee in most years, where committee members are encouraged to contribute written submissions to assess the impact of CAFCA's efforts and to make suggestions as to things the organisation could do better.

In a written contribution to an internal CAFCA strategy meeting in 1995, Bill Rosenberg (1995a) warned the group needed to make the best use of Murray's time and “not simply carry on doing things because we have always done them”. He also warned that increasing the size of CAFCA to make it more influential also risked changing the nature of CAFCA completely. Bill's 1995 paper represents a clear statement that in order to survive and increase its influence, CAFCA must evolve.

²⁶ Author interview

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One way Bill suggested CAFCA could increase its influence to bring change was to encourage the development of a “respectable CAFCA”, envisaging that such an organisation might act as a more acceptable public face for the movement in a similar way to how Citizens Association for Racial Equality (CARE) acted as a more acceptable face for the anti-apartheid movement, not directly associated to the more radical Halt All Racist Tours (HART) (B. Rosenberg, 1995a, 1995a). In a CAFCA committee strategy meeting the following year, Murray Horton reflected on this comparison and suggested “we need to find a HART to complement CAFCA’s CARE, not the other way around” (Horton, 1996a). The written minutes from the strategy meeting indicated there was agreement among the committee on this point, with a suggestion that perhaps CAFCA should organise a conference to attract such activists, so long as this was part of a strategy to increase activism within CAFCA, rather than being just a one-off event (*Notes from CAFCA Strategising Session*, 1996).

Along with this, Bill suggested CAFCA consider where it wanted New Zealand to be in ten years-time, a point I will discuss in the conclusion while considering the overall effectiveness and potential future of the group. In the interim, Rosenberg advocated for CAFCA to move beyond a predominately educative role:

“Simple education at this stage is just too late to have any effect. It is like teaching people civil defence precautions in the middle of a hurricane. Of course education must still occur, but not only or even predominately education. Action to bring about change is crucial. Action is also the best educator.” (B. Rosenberg, 1995a)

The strategy meeting resolved that in order to move beyond educative activities, CAFCA should propose more alternatives. This included making recommendations for oversight of foreign investment in submissions on the Overseas Investment Bill. Hosting a conference in Christchurch was suggested. Another proposal led to CAFCA to develop a Corporate Code of Responsibility, which was launched at the Taking Control Conference in 1998 (CAFCA, 1998; *Notes from CAFCA Strategising Session*, 1995). I will discuss this conference further below.

The formation of branches is another means in which CSOs can grow. The potential for CAFCA branches has been discussed a number of times over the years. In March 1975, a branch of CAFCA emerged in Wellington following the Resistance Ride. The 1976 CAFCA AGM resolved to encourage the development of “self-reliant” new branches, with Christchurch remaining the national centre, but “not as a top priority” (‘AGM Report’, 1976).

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The Wellington branch of CAFCA caused problems. The Wellington group organised a North Island Resistance Ride to be held in January 1976, only to cancel it at the last minute, citing low registrations and the unavailability of key people ('Lower North Island Resistance Ride', 1976). Press releases issued by the Wellington group became the subject of correspondence with the Christchurch organisation, in which the latter felt the political line being adopted by Wellington was too narrow for the broader base CAFCA was attempting to attract. The Wellington line was influenced by the Three World's theory of Mao Zedong and placed greater emphasis on opposing the "imperialism" of the superpowers of the U.S. and U.S.S.R. At the 1977 CAFCINZ AGM representatives from Wellington moved a resolution to change the aims and goals of CAFCINZ. While the subsequent vote on the resolution was lost, it was decided that Christchurch discuss the draft advocated by Wellington with a view to "amending the aims decided on at the previous AGM" ('CAFCINZ AGM', 1977). This may have been the attempted "takeover" described by Horton (personal communication, 22 December 2014). However no other participants spoken to describe the dispute in those terms. The Christchurch-based activists also noted a similarity between the Wellington political line and one advocated by one of the nascent communist parties around at the time. This reflected a concern that the adoption of such a stance could threaten the independence of CAFCINZ.

Wellington CAFCINZ reported to the AGM that that Wellington's activities had been limited because of their inability to define clearly their aims. Leaflets had been distributed on fishing, boilermakers and PBEC (Pacific Basin Economic Council)²⁷, with educational material contributed to student newspapers. In his chairperson's report Bill Rosenberg noted there had been "little activity as an organisation" ('CAFCINZ AGM', 1977). Wellington CAFCINZ appears to have petered out in December 1977 following a small protest opposing the operation of Soviet fishing boats in New Zealand waters (CAFCINZ (Wellington) & July 4 Committee, 1977).

Yet without a branch structure CAFCA became a largely Christchurch centric organisation. The question of whether CAFCA should aim to become a national organisation was raised as a point for discussion at the 1980 CAFCA AGM and in Watchdog.

"The advantages of a national organization are self-evident. The issue of foreign control is a national one, always has been, and should be opposed on a national basis. Despite being Christchurch-based, CAFCINZ has always striven to have a national perspective, and this is reflected in the nationwide

²⁷ PBEC was one of the forerunners of APEC.

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circulation of “Watchdog”, etc, There are obvious physical limitations about a Christchurch group doing something about a pulp and paper mill at Marsden Point, for example.” (Horton, 1980c)

In a document prepared for the 1997 strategy meeting Horton gave an example of how the Christchurch centric nature of CAFCA could limit its campaigning ability.

“Our other big campaign of 1996 was the TrustBank sale. This was, as usual, a kneejerk reaction to an event. As such, we did a good job in mobilising broadbased opposition to it, but only in ChCh. It failed to become a national campaign, which exposes our weakness on the national level, but we built valuable local links, with both groups and key individuals. The speed and secrecy with which the deal proceeded stymied us.” (Horton, 1997a)

Yet following discussions in both 1980 and 1997 CAFCA rejected the idea of a branch structure. The difficulties experienced by and with the Wellington branch became the demonstration of what needed to be avoided. While there is no suggestion the Wellington CAFCA activists differed at all from their Christchurch colleagues in their adoption of a clear opposition to foreign control being linked to race issues, the experience of a branch adopting a different ideological line highlighted the potential for difficulties in this area.

“We never have, primarily because of the nature of the issue, which can, if it goes in one direction become quite racist and xenophobic, very unpleasant, and we were always worried that we couldn’t control branches and therefore we might be landed with a CAFCA branch with our name which was making very unpleasant statements about foreigners and racist things that could be said, anti-immigrant and all those kind of things that we have always been very careful to steer clear of.” (B. Rosenberg, personal communication, 20 January 2016)

Given the concerns about the dangers of adopting a branch structure, the appointment of a full time organiser in 1991 could be seen as an alternative means of increasing the national reach of CAFCA. Freed from the demands of an external job meant that Murray could travel more and devote more time to building relationships with activists in Christchurch and around the country (Horton, 1993b). It also allowed both Murray Horton and Bill Rosenberg to address the Peace, Power and Politics conference in Wellington in 1993. However it is notable that CAFCA devoted less time to the ‘conference circuit’ than similar organisations.

Working full time also allowed Murray to undertake his first speaking tour of the North Island in September and October of 1993. This allowed CAFCA to increase its membership and media profile, particularly with smaller local newspapers and radio. A typical media appearance included a photo of Murray with a long scroll listing all the foreign companies who have ‘bought up New Zealand’ in 1992, a device successfully used during the tour to help visualise the issue

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of foreign ownership ('Australians Pouring Most Money', 1993; 'Campaigner Storms Through', 1993; Daley, 1993; Gleeson, 1993). The tour also gained press coverage of CAFCA's concerns about Comalco, Telecom, privatisation and the operation of the OIC, coverage appearing in *City Voice* (Wellington), *Wanganui Chronical*, *Waihi Leader*, *Waikato This Week* and the *Waikato Times*. An interview on Don Carson's "Saturday Morning" programme on National Radio led to "a lot" of new members. For the first time, CAFCA gained coverage on iwi radio stations in Blenheim, Whanganui and Tauranga (Horton, 1993c, p. 5).

Highlighting how foreign control affected each area was another successful strategy for obtaining media coverage. For example, the Rodney Times ran a front page story about the sale of controlling share in a Matakana farm to Taiwanese investors ('\$55 Buys Taiwanese 74ha Farm Control', 1993, p. 1). Other local issues included land sales in Northland (Daley, 1993), concerns over foreign owned mining operations in Waihi ('Foreign Investors Take Cover - Horton Returns', 1993). Horton also visited a Maori community in Matakana Island in the Bay of Plenty who were preventing a multinational logging company from starting logging in their area ('Campaigner Storms Through', 1993), an example I will return to later in this chapter. The success of the 1993 speaking tour, led to Murray taking CAFCA on the road on similar tours every few years, typically in an election year. While having a full time organiser did increase the national reach of CAFCA and make the organisation less Christchurch centric, it is also possible that a greater amount of travel by the organiser and committee members could have increased these gains further.

28. Visibility in the media

Another important outlet for CAFCA's issues is the mainstream media. CAFCA puts out regular press releases along with the occasional opinion piece which result in sporadic coverage. Some participants felt CAFCA had gained greater coverage from the late 1990s onwards as their expertise was recognised, whereas others felt CAFCA gained less coverage as fewer of their activities concentrated on protest actions like the Resistance Ride. Some thought CAFCA gained less coverage in the media in the last ten years and this highlighted some potential weaknesses in CAFCA's communications.

While many participants highlighted Murray's skill at creating catchy and provocative soundbites, there was also a tendency for CAFCA communications to have an overreliance on well-used, even hackneyed slogans. As Bill Rosenberg noted in 2009:

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“Some of those old slogans may well still have truth in them, but they need to be constantly re-examined and put in a current context. Otherwise we may feel comfortable, but so will those resisting change, because we will have no persuasive case to the public for that change to happen.” (B. Rosenberg, 2009b)

When asked about the effectiveness of CAFCA press releases, a journalist made a similar point: “There is a bit of a trick to getting attention without being hackneyed, and I think CAFCA press releases are a bit hackneyed, unfortunately”. More explanation was needed, “not just slogans”. While acknowledging the resourcing issues that CAFCA face, the journalist suggested CAFCA try spreading the job of writing media releases around more than just one person, and “try a bit of different editing with each other” to “get some different nuances and be more persuasive” (C. Hutching, personal communication, 21 December 2015). A former parliamentary staffer suggested CAFCA press releases were “not designed to captivate your average journalist” and could appear more like a lecture or an opinion piece (C. Dann, personal communication, 20 December 2014). Instead of focusing on what CAFCA wants to say, they suggest more focus needs to be on “finding a way that will get through to them, rather than expressing the truth in the way you would like to express it” (op. cit.).

CAFCA generally gain more valuable coverage when the media approach its spokespeople, Murray Horton and Bill Rosenberg, to comment on issues. Often it’s a “matter of when the news machinery suddenly focuses on one of the areas where CAFCA are strong, CAFCA will always have a useful contribution to offer” (G. Bertram, personal communication, 21 January 2016). Journalists also contact Horton for background on stories to benefit from his long institutional memory; “the number of media people who ring up Murray...and...of the top of his head, this is his real strength, [he] can give you a 30 year history of X enterprise, the machinations of its foreign ownership, what it has done to its local workers, what it has done to the local environment and where it is now” (W. Brewer, personal communication, 13 October 2014)

The most common issue the media will ask CAFCA to comment on is land sales to foreigners, particularly where there is a news interest in the purchaser or the proposed sale is considered controversial. The media will also contact CAFCA to comment on other foreign investment issues given CAFCA’s acknowledged expertise in obtaining and analysing information from the Overseas Investment Office. The news media contact CAFCA about Comalco, especially when the government and/or power companies are in dispute over the discounted price Comalco wishes to pay for electricity. Occasionally this has also included Australian media. On one occasion, an ABC National radio reporter rang from Sydney, and noted how CAFCA had

highlighted similarities between the negotiating tactics used by Comalco on both sides of the Tasman. Yet the reporter only wanted to interview somebody “respectable”, so CAFCA sent him to Geoff Bertram (‘Comalco Does It Again’, 1993). In 1989 rival reporters from *The Listener* magazine and Television New Zealand’s (TVNZ) ‘*Frontline*’ programme utilised CAFCA’s files for prominent stories about the controversial smelter (‘Comalco: More Information More Manipulation’, 1989). ‘*Frontline*’ ran another story on Comalco in 1993 using material first released by CAFCA (‘Comalco’, 1997). I discuss these examples further in chapter 7. In the following year TVNZ sought background information from CAFCA for a programme on the Malaysian logging company Rimbanan Hijau (Horton, 1995d). On other issues CAFCA generally needs to be more proactive and issue press releases. While many are not picked up as stories, press releases also function to communicate with members through email networks and provide a basis for *Watchdog* articles.

There is a number of reasons why CAFCA generally do better obtaining coverage in print media than in other forms. First, the medium of the print media can allow longer quotes and greater detail to be reported than the typical soundbites of television and radio. For these reasons print media is more suited to CAFCA’s style which focuses on facts and analysis. Second, the type of issues and material CAFCA present do not lend themselves to obvious visual presentation unless the issue can be presented as an controversy or an animated debate. A long-time New Zealand journalist and media critic, Tom Frewen (1996), stresses the importance of broadcast media, particularly television, in setting the news agenda in New Zealand. Thus a lack of coverage in broadcast media may limit the impact and influence of CAFCA and marginalise its voice to some extent. While Chapter 5 will offer a more in-depth assessment of CAFCA’s contribution to political debate, I will now examine the ability of CAFCA to form relationships with likeminded groups and individuals, as no organisation can survive in a vacuum.

29. Relationships with other groups

As paid organiser, Murray has taken primary responsibility for CAFCA’s relationships with other organisations.

Over the years CAFCA have organised a number of popular front groups to campaign on specific issues, particularly those with a Christchurch focus. In 1977 the Pacific Basin Economic Council (PBEC) held its annual conference in Christchurch, with business leaders from major companies and business organisations in attendance. CAFCAINZ organised a protest outside the Town Hall, which the *Evening Post* newspaper described as the “rowdiest and most violent

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demonstration in Christchurch” since the Vietnam War (‘Rowdy Demo’, 1977). In 1979 CAFGINZ initiated a ‘People’s Coalition’ to protest the National Party conference, bringing together anti-apartheid groups, student groups, Tramway workers and socialist parties (‘Rally’, 1979). This became a model for future coalitions such as the Campaign for People’s Sovereignty (1992-1998), Keep Our Port Public (KOPP) (2006) and Keep Our Assets(2012) (Horton, 2013b; ‘CFPS’, 1992). CAFCA have also formed relationships with other groups on specific projects, such as standing alongside workers and their unions and the campaign to stop Westpac taking over Trustbank Canterbury (Horton, 2018). CAFCA also have links with fraternal organisations in other centres, with the long-standing relationship with Coromandel Watchdog, a group fighting multinational mining companies in the Coromandel region of the North Island.

Some of CAFCA’s strongest relationships are with trade unions, particularly those of a more progressive stripe. These initially grew from relationships between the PYM and the Seafarers Union and the involvement of CAFGINZ activists such as Murray Horton and Paul Corliss in the National Union of Railwaymen. Yet CAFCA have also utilised their independence to criticise unions from time to time. In 1975 a young Bill Rosenberg led a picket outside the Christchurch Trades Council calling on the unions to do more to prevent the sale of Mount Davy coal to Japan (Arthur, 1980; ‘Mt Davy’, 1975).

In the wake of the failure of the New Zealand Council of Trade Unions (NZCTU) to oppose effectively the Employment Contracts Act (Reid, 1992; Roper, 2007), a number of unions left the NZCTU in 1991 to form an alternative union grouping, the Trade Union Federation (TUF). While CAFCA had nothing to do with the NZCTU during this time, it built strong relationships with the TUF through a number of campaigns, most notably concerning opposition to unrestricted free trade and investment. This was part of a wider network that sought to create an education and information base on international economic issues, bringing together NGOs such as GATT Watchdog, CWS, the Council of Organisations for Relief Service Overseas (CORSO) and the academic Jane Kelsey (1999, p. 11). In 1998 CAFCA, GATT Watchdog and CORSO organised a three-day conference in Christchurch – “Taking Control: The Fightback Against Corporate Power”. This included the presentation of the inaugural Roger Award for the Worst Transnational Corporation operating in New Zealand. The Roger Award helped to build further relationships between CAFCA and the trade union movement, with unions nominating companies for the Roger as a means of highlighting poor treatment of workers and other issues. The Roger process also became a mechanism for information sharing, with unions then able to

make use of the Roger Reports and Financial Analysis in their work. I assess the Roger Award as a campaigning tool in Chapter 8.

The position adopted by the TUF on trade issues represented one of the most significant policy differences with the NZCTU, who adopted a pro-globalisation line, including support for the controversial MAI (Choudry, 1997). Following a change in leadership in the NZCTU and the merger of the TUF unions back into the NZCTU fold in 2001, CAFCA maintained its relationships with progressive unionists. In 2009, the NZCTU appointed Bill Rosenberg as Economist and Policy Director, a high recognition from the trade union movement of Rosenberg's knowledge, skill and ability. Rosenberg held that position for a decade.

30. Relationships with Maori

The position of Maori as New Zealand's indigenous people gained greater prominence in the 1970s and 1980s, with increasing recognition of New Zealand as a bicultural nation and the Treaty of Waitangi²⁸ as a partnership (Hayward, 2012).

Some activists believe CAFCA has given inadequate attention to the Treaty and its relationship to issues of foreign control. For Leigh Cookson this reflects:

“a lack of understanding in CAFCA about indigenous issues and certainly about tino rangatiratanga and what that might mean, [and] no understanding of colonisation and how that might fit in and how their role fits within that when you are talking about foreign control. That was an ongoing and difficult battle within GATT Watchdog as well, we had a very strong and staunch stance in support of tino rangatiratanga and to Murray's credit he never got in the way of that, but he was never comfortable with it either.” (L. Cookson, personal communication, 5 May 2015)

In his 1997 Organisers Report Horton (1997c) noted:

“The past year or so has witnessed a remarkable convergence of interests and activities by CAFCA, GATT Watchdog and CORSO. It is no secret that we do not share their emphasis on indigenous issues, and specifically Maori sovereignty, and that difference means there is a permanent tension in the

²⁸ While most Maori chiefs signed a version of the treaty in the Maori language, there were significant differences between this and the English version. While Article I of the English version ceded absolute 'sovereignty' to the British crown, the Maori version of the text only referred to 'kawanatanga' (governance). This implied a lower standard of authority than that of sovereign rulers. Ironically, in the second article of the treaty, the Maori text seeks to guarantee the undisturbed possession of Maori properties with the use of the term tino rangatiratanga (highest chieftainship), which many have noted is a more accurate translation of sovereignty than kawanatanga as used in Article I (McDowell, 1998, p. 198; Orange, 2011, p. 41). On this basis many claim Maori never ceded sovereignty over New Zealand, a position that is supported by the international legal convention of contra proferentem, which states that in cases where a clause in a treaty is ambiguous, that clause should be interpreted against the interests of the party who provided the wording.

relationship. “

For most of its life CAFCA had little contact with Maori. This began to change in the early 1990s, both through their joint work with GATT Watchdog, Roger Moody²⁹ and through their own networking. Activists from CAFCA and GATT Watchdog organised a seminar “Reclaim Our Nation” in May 1992 (‘CFPS’, 1992), examining the relationship between foreign control and a range of issues, including the environment, impact on women and military links. The seminar also brought two high profile Maori speakers to Christchurch, Auckland City Councillor Sandra Lee and constitutional lawyer Moana Jackson. The workshops went very well, and the Christchurch based activists decided to keep meeting as the ‘Campaign for People’s Sovereignty’ (CFPS). CFPS included a commitment to Maori sovereignty.

Also in 1992, CAFCA also gained greater contact with Maori through the Matakana Island campaign. The origins of the dispute went back to 1869, when the Maori population living in the Tauranga Harbour lost a sizable portion of the island in dubious circumstances. Local Maori watched with alarm as the valuable forestry assets on the land were acquired in 1989 by London Pacific, who then clear-felled the forest in the months before the company was placed into receivership in 1990 (‘Matakana Island’, 1993; Gaynor, 2017). Despite Matakana’s Te Kotukutaku Corporation (TKC), along with its business partners, matching the \$20 million price, the receivers accepted a bid from forestry multinationals ITT Rayonier and Ernslaw One in November 1992. The OIC approved the purchase the following month, but withheld all details from the public domain, until CAFCA appealed. The documents revealed a purchase price of \$20.7 million.

In February 1993 TKC applied for an injunction to stop the sale alleging the sale did not comply with the Overseas Investment Act and other legislation relating to land. Concerned that the forest could be clear-felled by the new owners while the parties awaited the decision of the court, the islanders imposed a 24 hour blockade of the road. In August the High Court granted the injunction, ruling that corporate manoeuvrings during the transaction were clearly intended to avoid the need to obtain ministerial consent under the Overseas Investment Act and related legislation (‘Matakana Island’, 1993).

John Neill, Chairman of the Matakana Island Trust, acted as CAFCA’s main contact with the islanders. CAFCA publicised the plight of the islanders through a number of stories in *Watchdog*, and Murray Horton visited Matakana during his 1993 speaking tour and observed as

²⁹ See Page 115.

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the activists debated whether to lift the blockade. Horton noted the blockaders were not ‘Maori radicals’ but “conservative, rural, religious people” (‘Matakana Island’, 1993). Horton was taken around the island and assisted with local media appearances, including a two-hour stint on an iwi radio station. In his other speaking engagements around the country Horton hailed the Matakana blockade as an example of how ordinary New Zealanders could fight back against the world’s biggest multinationals.

The same year, Horton was commissioned by a Maori newspaper, *Mana Tangata*, to write an article, “The Brown Table” looking into the growth of “Maori capitalism” and joint ventures between Maori interests and multinationals (Horton, 1993c). The most high profile example was the Sealords deal, where the Treaty of Waitangi Fisheries Commission and New Zealand based multinational Brierley Investments gained control of the largest fisheries company in New Zealand, comprising 26% of fishing quota. The deal included a \$150 million mortgage over Sealord’s assets funded by a syndicate of foreign banks. CAFCA questioned this aspect of the deal, as default on the loan could mean the banks could end up owning the quota, despite it being illegal under the 1983 Fisheries Act for foreigners to own more than 25% of any company’s fishing quota. In response the Minister of Fisheries, Doug Kidd, told reporters there were all manner of safeguards, and that CAFCA were “financial ignoramuses” (Keene, 1993). In 1994 the Ngai Tahu Trust Board requested all OIC material on South Island rural land purchases from CAFCA in order to show that despite opposition to Maori pastoral purchases, foreign purchases were going on apace (Horton, 1994b). Despite their differences with advocates of “Maori capitalism” CAFCA were happy to oblige for a fee. Maori also made use of CAFCA information while researching treaty claims. Leigh Cookson (personal communication, 5 May 2015) notes “we should say Maori had a great deal of respect for CAFCA because of the efficacy of the research and the usefulness of that to them in the battles that were going on in different places. So they forgave the underlying issues reasonably easily.”

Through the 1990s Maori groups successfully campaigned on a number of issues relating to foreign control such as the sale of Matakana Island and the MAI. There were other signs that CAFCA recognised common interests with Maori. In 1995 Bill Rosenberg’s contribution to the CAFCA annual strategy session noted that “Maori sovereignty is likely to be a rapidly growing political force with which we should have much sympathy – but also recognise its possible weaknesses. We need to have closer contacts with Maori, but also need to consider carefully what form our mutual support should take. This is a major and obvious gap in our networks.” (B. Rosenberg, 1995a). The strategy session resolved to “build contacts with Maori groups and

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consider our attitudes to Maori sovereignty”, with Bill tasked with making the initial approaches. Later that year in his organiser’s report Murray Horton noted “We have made first tentative contact with the Maori nationalist movement - we have obvious things in common, and I personally believe that they represent the most dynamic movement for social change in the country at present. As an organisation run by South Island Pakeha, CAFCA is bound to have only a limited relationship with them but it is vital that we make the effort.” (Horton, 1995e). In 2002, Horton expressed support on behalf of CAFCA for efforts of the local iwi to retain a part of Young Nick’s Head station.

"Their concern is a couple of 100 hectares that are of particular significance to Maori . . . our point of view is that, one, land of significance to New Zealanders, Maori or Pakeha, should not be sold overseas, and preferably should be in public ownership. And, two, farms etc and land, should not be sold overseas. If you're talking about Young Nick's Station, we would oppose the sale of the whole lot. One thing that the Young Nick's Head hikoi down Lambton Quay has brought sharply into focus is that Pakehas are getting an idea of what Maori learnt the hard way 160 years ago. What it's like to have foreigners come in and pull out the rug from under you." (Horton in Rendle, 2002)

In 2017 and 2018 CAFCA worked on a campaign called ‘the Aotearoa Independence Movement’ (AIM) that sought to “capitalise on the global and national revulsion at Donald Trump and build a campaign for a non-aligned, truly independent Aotearoa” (Horton, 2018). Yet as a campaign it failed to gain any significant traction and its launch in January 2018 turned into a discussion as to whether AIM should continue, and a vote determined it would not. There was a lack of clarity as to AIM’s purpose. With Horton acting as main spokesperson it may have seemed to some as indistinguishable from CAFCA. While AIM was described as a campaign rather than a new organisation or a political party, the suggestion that CAFCA could possibly become a component part of AIM in future did suggest a new organisation was a possibility. Other criticisms included concerns about the organising style and a question as to how a campaign about “independence and sovereignty” could proceed without tino rangatiratanga being central to it. While Horton (2018) denied the latter issue was relevant to the decision to wind up AIM, it did spark a further discussion within CAFCA concerning tino rangatiratanga. Bryan Turner, a CAFCA committee member (2012-2018) set up two meetings between committee members of Network Waitangi Otautahi and CAFCA. Horton reported on the meetings in his 2019 Organisers Report.

“Those two meetings with Network Waitangi Otautahi were both instructive and useful. Which is not to say that we agreed on everything - discussion was robust and there was a free and frank exchange of views. We agreed that our

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common ground is that we're both dealing with foreign control but different aspects of it: Network Waitangi with the consequences of colonisation; CAFCA with transnational corporate recolonisation.” (Horton, 2019)

While CAFCA’s have never outlined their reasons for caution in regards to an adoption of a commitment to tino rangatiratanga, some reasons suggest themselves. There may have been concerns that the issue could have distracted from their chosen focus on foreign control, at a point when CAFCA’s history had already demonstrated the value of ‘sticking to their kaupapa’. Some historians, following Peter Gibbons, have questioned whether the nation is the appropriate focus for New Zealand histories, and have sought a framework outside ‘cultural nationalism’ (Gibbons, 2002; Pollock, 2007). But for CAFCA, adopting an approach like this would tantamount to starting a new organisation. Perhaps most pertinently, the Maori sovereignty debate caused significant internal friction in a number of organisations in New Zealand in the 1980s, and a number of organisations failed to survive as a result (Nicky Hagar in Simmons, 2007; Sutton et al., 2008).

While some activists have expressed disappointment that CAFCA has not formally adopted a commitment to Maori sovereignty nor attempted to address fully the relationship between this and foreign control, these concerns do not appear to be widespread. Nevertheless CAFCA represents an interesting example of a Pakeha organisation that has moved some of the way towards finding some common ground with Maori and showing greater sympathy for injustices suffered. In doing so it may provide an intellectual springboard for others to address these issues in the future.

In Chapter 2 I discussed the international origins and influence of the Washington Consensus and the associated claim of an international consensus in favour of neoliberal economic policies. I will now discuss the influence of this ‘consensus’ in New Zealand and the potential for these ideas to marginalise CAFCA.

31. To what extent was CAFCA marginalised by neoliberalism?

In the New Zealand context, the ‘Wellington Consensus’ was a subset, if not an ideal model, of the Washington Consensus (Eichbaum & Harris, 1999, p. 13), in which the force of ideas went further than just meeting the supposed requirements of international finance (Harris, 1999, p. 23). Writing in *Watchdog* in 1988, Bill Rosenberg (1988) noted how a dependence on foreign investors and transnational’s ‘confidence’ meant that economic policies not to their liking could not be seriously debated in New Zealand, giving the example of how “born again Rogernomics

supporter”, Rob Campbell, had told the Labour party conference “the debate [on economic policies] would be observed by financial market traders and lead to decisions on investment, industry location and whether projects would proceed”. Senior journalists framed questions in a fashion friendly to the free market, in a way that often made critics appear irrational or anachronistic (Hope, 2017, p. 11). An obsession with ‘economically correct’ served to freeze ideas, discouraged empirical testing of key assumptions and strengthened the resolve of those who claimed that ‘there is no alternative’ (Kelsey, 1999). According to New Zealand economist Brian Easton;

“economists who disagreed did not, by and large, publicly promote an alternative. They found themselves ignored, their funding cut, access to contracts cut, appointment opportunities denied, and subject to petty harassment”. (Easton, 1997, p. 140)

Jesson (1989, p. 71), Haworth (1997) and Kelsey (1993) make similar points. Yet it is one thing to say that such a consensus could exist, and it is quite another to maintain that such a consensus represents economic truths. Nevertheless, this environment of ideological closure was another factor leading to political marginalisation of CAFCA.

Such marginalisation can be reinforced by the disproportionate influence over government institutions normally wielded by business associations. Not only do such associations normally have greater resources than CSOs, trade unions and social movements, but advocates of business also benefit from structural advantages (Roper, 1993, 2006)³⁰. Governments are more likely to listen to business due to the fiscal reliance of the state on the taxation of profits and incomes generated in the process of capital accumulation, operating within a context of increasingly deregulated international markets and capital mobility (ibid.).

In an address to the Christchurch Rotary Club in May 1995 the Executive Director of the Business Roundtable, Roger Kerr, perhaps inadvertently, acknowledged the attempt to create an environment of ideological closure in favour of market friendly policies when he called for the creation of “an environment where politicians are able to implement further changes – or indeed are unable to resist a consensus that change should occur” (Kerr, 1995). To assess the stance taken by the media, he examined the editorial stance of the Christchurch newspaper, *The Press*,

³⁰ I acknowledge there are wider debates concerning ‘business power’ in this context however greater consideration of these issues was curtailed by a lack of space. While some CSOs and business organisations operate with a greater focus on making submissions to Parliament and meeting with politicians, CAFCA place greater focus on communicating with the public. While I discuss some other examples of influence by other national CSOs, a single case study setup does not provide a framework in which to meaningfully compare the influence of different CSOs. This constrains my ability to make conclusions in this area.

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over the preceding decade. While Kerr criticised its earlier editorial columns for supporting compulsory unionism, farmer subsidies and opposition to corporatisation, he noted that around 1993 *The Press* began to more consistently advocate free market positions closer to that advocated by the Roundtable. In the 1993 to 1995 period, the Press, Kerr believed, “has generally been a signed up supporter of New Zealand’s economic directions” (Kerr, 1995).

Attempts to create a climate of ideological closure were assisted by changes in the New Zealand media landscape, such as a shift from family to corporate press ownership and an expanding private commercial radio sector (Hope, 2017). In 1992 Murray Horton (1992a) wrote an ‘obituary’ of the *Christchurch Star* following its transformation, some would say demise, from a serious daily newspaper to a twice weekly giveaway. This meant *The Press* gained a monopoly on the Christchurch newspaper market, which in practical terms also meant Christchurch activists could no longer threaten to take their stories to ‘the opposition’. Horton remarked on the good relationships CAFCA forged with a number of *Star* journalists, including Don Grady, Chris Hutching and Greg Ansley.

In 1996, Murray Horton (1996c) analysed ‘The politics of The Press’ for a CAFCA event called ‘Who owns the news’. While Horton notes the editorial line of *The Press* in the 1980s under the editorship of Binne Locke was hostile to the peace movement, at the same time CAFCA were regularly the subject or inspiration for detailed articles in the features section, most notably the work of journalists Garry Arthur and Ken Coates (Arthur, 1980, 1985a, 1986; Horton, 1992a, 1996c). Horton pinpoints a change in attitude of *The Press* towards CAFCA in the first half of the 1990s, when CAFCA found its opinion pieces regularly rejected, and its attempts to offer factual corrections to headlines concerning New Zealand’s foreign debt brushed aside, most likely because they challenged an ideologically appealing notion that selling assets would lower New Zealand’s debt levels in a significant fashion. Horton used Kerr’s Rotary Club speech to demonstrate his point that the politics of *The Press* had moved from an endorsement of traditional National party conservatism to identifying with the neoliberal policies of the then current National government and the ideology of the New Right.

While nearly all interviewees agreed that CAFCA had been marginalised, they differed as to the time periods in which CAFCA were most marginalised, and the reasons that they were marginalised. The association with activism may have led some in the news media not to regard CAFCA as “respectable” and this led to occasions where CAFCA did not get due credit for their work. Many felt that CAFCA had become more ‘respectable’ in recent years, and saw the willingness of the media to seek CAFCA out for comment to reflect this. Geoff Bertram also

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highlights cultural factors in New Zealand society that contribute to the marginalisation of groups like CAFCA;

“this is a country where the clobbering machine takes out anything outside the mainstream group, very quickly so. So its always been easy for mainstream politicians to ignore CAFCA on the basis they are extremists of one sort of another. Nevertheless it gets mentioned in Parliament from time to time, it does make it into the news headlines. The Roger Award is actually noticed by large companies, who take it more or less seriously.” (G. Bertram, personal communication, 21 January 2016)

In 1990 Bruce Jesson (1990) made similar comments about CAFCA: “It is one of the oddities of New Zealand, and one of our minor tragedies, that many people of talent and ability are repelled by our way of life and exist on the margins.”

While CAFCA was marginalised by the growing influence of neoliberal ideas, the fact that it survived suggests that the marginalisation was not complete, otherwise one would have expected CAFCA to have fade out like other organisations that dated from the Keynesian era. Yet if it was the case that CAFCA were also marginalised in the prior Keynesian era, this may have meant they were better positioned to survive than organisations that expected to be part of the mainstream.

32. Were CAFCA always marginalised?

At the onset of this research I understood that CAFCA was marginalised by the growing influence of neoliberalism and related models of globalisation, which both appeared to be combining to depoliticise civil society. Some participants felt CAFCA may have been marginalised, particularly in the earlier years, from the association with the Christchurch PYM, in which Murray Horton was a leading figure. “By 1969 the PYM had become a nationwide bogey – the very epitome of youthful lawlessness. Both National and Labour politicians blasted the PYM” (Boraman, 2002)

On the Resistance Ride in 1975, the activists found the attention, presence and actions of the police could also lead to the group being marginalised. The ride was shadowed around the South Island by two policemen, who the activists nicknamed ‘Tom and Jerry’ (Horton, 2015b). A participant on the Ride, John Christie, described the actions of the police as “extremely unhelpful” (*CAFCA Newsletter*, 1975). Another participant on the Ride, Diane Hooper (1975), wrote that the activists were “staggered to read police notices in local papers warning the townspeople of our intended arrival” in Cromwell, effectively priming the locals to expect

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trouble. Hooper also reports that a “mobile police van followed us constantly and police contingents were always in close proximity wherever we were in the South Island. No-one was flattered by the police escort.” Owen Wilkes (NZPA, 1975c) and Hooper believe the actions of the police made it more difficult for the campaigners to talk to the public. While Wilkes said the group were met with open hostility in some cases, generally the group were well received in the area (op. cit.).

The two policemen following the resistance ride made their own assessment of CAFCA’s media presence. This formed part of a police ‘noting’ file that CAFCA obtained in the 1980s.

"The initial press coverage for this group obtained before leaving Christchurch was very poor and it became apparent as they went further on their tour, that they were wishing to obtain further publicity. The incidents in Cromwell and Alexandra involving uniform patrol cars added fuel to the fire and consequently their publicity campaign and press coverage increased by the time they got to Dunedin....As far as Comalco was concerned, in my opinion their demonstration was a flop and they did not get the coverage that they had expected. There were no incidents worth reporting and this could be greatly attributed to the efficient organisation of the Police and the low key approach adopted." (Quoted in Horton, 1987, p. 19)

Yet Hooper (1975) believed the protest at the gates of the Comalco Bluff aluminium smelter received sympathetic and accurate coverage in the Southland Times. This coverage is all the more impressive and surprising given the central importance of the smelter to the Southland economy. Christie described the attitude of news media as “uncooperative or hostile towards us, the prime example being the *Christchurch Press*.” (CAF CINZ Newsletter, 1975). While CAFCA may not have appreciated the editorial line of *The Press* on the Resistance Ride, in other ways the coverage was generous with three front page stories that included long quotes from CAFCA spokespeople (‘Incident-Free Demonstration at Mt John’, 1975; NZPA, 1975a, 1975b). A similar activist group may struggle to get such coverage today.

There were other instances of unwanted surveillance. An April 1980 edition of *Watchdog* (‘Dirty Tricks Ltd’, 1980) detailed CAF CINZ suspicions the government of Robert Muldoon were involved in a “campaign of dirty tricks” aimed at opponents of government policies, and attempted to contextualise recent underhand actions taken against the Socialist Union Party and the trade union movement. It also detailed a likely infiltration of CAFCA by an undercover policeman. A very active committee member had suddenly left Christchurch in early 1977, only to reappear in November 1979 in Nelson as a police constable (Idem.). There were also suspicions of surveillance by the SIS, and these suspicions continued into the 1980s. Such

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concerns over surveillance may have had an impact on CAFCINZ's functioning as an organisation. A former committee member described this environment as "tense". While an SIS file later confirmed CAFCINZ publications and some internal communications had been monitored, there are no indications that an SIS informer infiltrated the committee (Horton, 2009a). The SIS filed away the April 1980 edition of *Watchdog*, with the amusing comment: "On page 3 under the heading of 'Spying' there is a valuable lesson for Intelligence Officers in trying to arrange penetration of a target." (*NZSIS Memo: CAFCINZ 'Watch Dog'*, 1980) While an informer did report on member events such as CAFCINZ AGMs, the SIS also received reports on CAFCINZ matters while reporting on other organisations such as the Communist Party. Some of these reports and documents were sent to the SIS by the Christchurch Police (Horton, 2009a). While CAFCA experienced some negative impacts from the surveillance by state agencies, not only did CAFCA survive, but this own surveillance became a focus for their research and public calls for such agencies to act with greater transparency. As I will explain in the next chapter, CAFCA's efforts to obtain their SIS file speak to their determination and ability to play the long game.

While CAFCA were marginalised by the growing influence of neoliberalism and related models of globalisation, perhaps one of the most significant reasons why CAFCA survived is that its key activists had long experience of being marginalised, so perhaps CAFCA, unlike other organisations and groups, did not have to change its modes of operation, and could continue in an environment of sharp ideological closure. Sue Newberry found other voices were marginalised:

"When I was looking at the financial reforms that followed 1984, in some of the material that I unearthed, that was looking at some of the legislation that was going through and it was quite clear there were views being marginalised, but they were more mainstream views to begin with." (S. Newberry, personal communication, 23 January 2015)

Newberry suggests that the New Zealand Institute of Economic Research (NZIER), headed by Easton between 1981 and 1986, is an example of a more mainstream voice that was marginalised. Easton (2009) himself reports that he got the impression he was not acceptable to key elements in the Reserve Bank and Treasury, and he felt he was ultimately "forced out" of his NZIER position.

Through this period, CAFCA won respect by maintaining a consistent position and playing 'the long game'. One business journalist remarked: "It's hard to know how much they touched the mainstream, journalists and media were aware of them. But also I think they were one of the few

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oppositional groups that seemed to be steady at the time and didn't waver. I mean Labour were thoroughly confused." (C. Hutching, personal communication, 21 December 2015). Bill Rosenberg believes CAFCA survived because "we stuck to our knitting and people understood what we were doing and had respect for us sticking to both our kaupapa, in terms of understanding what were about" and through maintaining independence from political parties "that people grew to hate" (B. Rosenberg, personal communication, 20 January 2016).

For CAFCA, being unfashionable may have turned out to be a strength. As Leigh Cookson identified; "they don't panic when they are out of fashion and think they are wrong and need to do something else, they simply ride the wave and it comes back...Murray plays the long game really and he does that really well" (L. Cookson, personal communication, 5 May 2015). Mary Ellen O'Connor (M. E. O'Connor, personal communication, 16 May 2015) made similar comments; "I think the long view is quite [an] important thing to have, and I think that is another reason why they haven't sunk. It's kind of a long view that knowledge that Rome wasn't built in a day". O'Connor points out it took the Labour party nearly 20 years from their founding in 1916 before they became the government in 1935. Yet in playing the long game there is also a danger an organisation prepares for a future that never arrives, as identified by Rosenberg (1995a). I will discuss this further in the conclusion.

While there are elements of habit in the operation of CAFCA this is likely to occur in any long-running organisation, particularly where key personnel have been constant. The force of habit can be both a strength and a weakness. That said, while it may not have been obvious to outside observers, the survival of CAFCA as an organisation was aided by a capacity for critical self-reflection and renewal – as shown by the documents produced for internal strategy meetings.

Some participants did not see a lack of growth, change or policy success as necessarily a weakness. Indeed, some attributed CAFCA's survival to the fact that the "battle is never ever won" and that CAFCA continues to touch a nerve with many people. Others suggested that the push towards neoliberalism could act to sustain and energise CAFCA.

"as more and more people came aware of the neoliberal agenda, and the implications of it, that's where the enthusiasm for CAFCA by newbies has come from, people who have suddenly clicked to what the TPPA is about, or the embedding of the neoliberal economic agenda in our own legislation here...I think we are still relevant...but we are only relevant for people who are at a certain level of grasping the fundamentals." (W. Brewer, personal communication, 13 October 2014)

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Others thought that CAFCA has successfully defined a political space for itself, and that there is no shortage of issues (K. Locke, personal communication, 2014).

For Murray Horton, the imposition of the “Wellington Consensus” in the 1980s did not have a significant impact on how CAFCA were regarded.

“we have picked up more and more credibility over the years because what we deal in is facts as opposed to rhetoric, we have maintained a consistent position all the way through, we haven’t filled and flopped, we are not like for example the old Communist Party that sort of jumped on to any passing sort of new model and then went into oblivion. So we have survived, more than survived, we have thrived as I say in terms of the quality and quantity of the committee now. The membership has dropped, that is probably as much age as anything else but the committee has certainly improved and is very active.” (M. Horton, personal communication, 22 December 2014)

CAFCA survived due to the determination, dedication and specific skills of its key people. Its experience of being marginalised throughout its existence, ironically may have been an asset when faced with the forces of a politically empowered neoliberal orthodoxy. CAFCA was able to remain unfashionable, play the long game and as a result, no one could pretend that no one out there was talking about the issues that concerned it.

The employment of a full time organiser for CAFCA/ABC in 1991 enabled the organisation to grow into more of a nationally focused organisation despite having no branch structure. This allowed CAFCA to conduct national speaking tours and widen their relationships at both the local and national level. From its beginnings as a Pakeha focused organisation, developed greater relationships and shared interests with Maori in the early 1990s. This led to the organisation considering the issue of Maori sovereignty to some extent.

Yet having a single paid organiser also heightened the issue of CAFCA being reliant on a few individuals and their personal circumstances. While CAFCA survived the move of Bill Rosenberg to Wellington in 2009, and was able to reassign some roles, this placed greater importance on the role of the paid organiser once again. I will discuss the potential future of CAFCA in the conclusion.

Chapter 6: CAFCA's Contribution to Political Debate

It might be expected that a modest group like CAFCA would have limited influence. In the previous chapter I discussed how CAFCA's message may have been marginalised in political debate in New Zealand. I also discussed some of the limitations under which CAFCA operated. With no real presence outside their Christchurch base, a small publication run (around 500 an edition), a small membership, a small committee and a single paid organiser, it could be expected that CAFCA would only have made a minimal contribution to national political debate.

Such an assumption might reflect Neo-Tocquevillian conceptions of civil society and a preference for bridging social capital. As we saw in the earlier literature review, some civil society advocates claim national social movement organisations (SMOs) do not positively contribute to the development of social capital and thus should not be regarded as part of civil society (Minkoff, 2001, p. 187). Putnam (2000) relegates national SMOs as "tertiary" associations" from the point of view of social connectedness. Yet if such conceptions of civil society minimise or downplay the role played by national political CSOs, there is a danger that the contribution of CSOs in shaping political discourse and mobilising collective interests may be overlooked. In examining the potential influence and contribution of CAFCA I hope here to address the lacuna in the literature identified by Smith (2001) and Minkoff (2001).

This chapter will examine CAFCA's five-year campaign to encourage greater openness and transparency concerning the decisions of the Overseas Investment Commission, and the impact of the release of this information, as well as CAFCA's analysis of this information, on public and academic debates. I will also examine the contribution CAFCA have made to debates in New Zealand concerning land sales to foreigners, the local impact of transnational corporations and the downsides of privatisation. I examine the influence of CAFCA in the academic realm, in particular noting the contribution made by CAFCA to debates concerning news media ownership and foreign investment in New Zealand. While an assessment of contribution might be more straightforward for a group that is widely recognised and of a large size, one of the factors that makes CAFCA interesting is that, despite its small size, it has still made a discernible contribution. Here, a series of case studies demonstrate how ideas and information are introduced and transferred through civil society, in this case, in the work of CAFCA. In this, this study may assist in a more balanced and accurate assessment of the impact of similar groups.

33. Assessing CAFCA's contribution

As I will show, there are clear instances where CAFCA caused governments, other organisations and individuals to do things they would not have otherwise done, thereby meeting Dahl's (1957) notion of power/influence I introduced earlier. There were also instances where the contribution of CAFCA was more subtle, perhaps buttressing a position in an existing dialogue. Given the significant amount of variables that account for influence in civil society, some contributions may be immeasurable, while others can be suggested by careful qualitative assessment.

It is difficult to assess the reach of CAFCA's magazine *Foreign Control Watchdog*, a difficulty highlighted by Bill Rosenberg (personal communication, 20 January 2016): "500 copies are printed, how many more people read it, who knows? We don't get surveyed by Nielson or something like that. I suspect it lies around in people's living rooms and offices at work and things like that, and so it does get a wider readership and people do read bits online but it's hard to know". While Murray Horton was in Timaru he met a non-subscriber who reads every issue of *Watchdog* at the local TradeAid shop where he works as a volunteer, telling Horton he thought *Watchdog* was "the best magazine around" (M. Horton, personal communication, 22 December 2014). Other participants highlighted other ways CAFCA's publication reached beyond CAFCA's membership, such as copies *Foreign Control Watchdog* being held by institutions, libraries and government departments.

Another complexity in assessing the contribution of CAFCA to political debate is that often the influence of CAFCA is not immediate. While in one sense this is a signal of a lack of immediate impact, the interest of the group in foreign control, together with their strengths in research and analysis, and perhaps most importantly, the longevity of CAFCA, have allowed the group to make a particular kind of contribution as a perennial journal of record, a valuable resource for others.

In an assessment of CAFCA's effectiveness in 1995 Bill Rosenberg described the potential contribution made by CAFCA to political debate, specifically relating to increasing overseas ownership and influence in the New Zealand economy.

"CAFCA is recognised (unwillingly by some) as something of an authority on such issues. We are respected in this sense by sections of the conventional media for example; we are well respected among other protest groups – even if not always agreed with. We are increasingly asked for information on a variety of issues that other groups are fighting. We should probably win the prize for being the group most often quoted without acknowledgement. All of this is what we hoped for." (B. Rosenberg, 1995a, p. 1)

Here, first, I will discuss CAFCA's most significant contribution to political debate in New Zealand, the campaign to gain greater public transparency of the operations of the Overseas Investment Commission.

34. The little known government agency that wanted to remain little known.

Despite public and press interest in foreign ownership matters (Enderwick, 1997), by the 1980s the OIC remained an obscure government agency that worked in relative secrecy. It published neither annual reports nor other regular account of its activities (B. Ansley, 1989a), and had published no general statistics on foreign investment since 1981 ('Battling', 1988). Requests from news organisations were refused (G. Ansley, 1987).

CAFCA wrote to the OIC in February 1985 utilising the Official Information Act to request details on foreign investment applications made each month. The OIC refused the request in case CAFCA "became privy to the planning and development strategies of many overseas companies operating in New Zealand" (G. Ansley, 1987). It claimed much of the information had been supplied in confidence and it was too difficult to identify the information that was confidential and what information could be released. The OIC also claimed the release of information would prejudice the future supply of information from investors, that CAFCA's request was "not specified with due particularity" and that the information could not be made available without substantial collation or research ('Battling', 1988). This was the beginning of a five-year-long battle between CAFCA and the OIC.

CAFCA appealed to the Ombudsman suggesting the OIC should have a regular newsletter or bulletin that would publish the information CAFCA were requesting. Following a suggestion from the Ombudsman, CAFCA made their request to the OIC again with greater detail on the information they required and suggested they would be willing to pay a reasonable charge. This request was again rejected by the OIC. CAFCA appealed to the Ombudsman once again. In November 1986 the Chief Ombudsman, Lester Castle died. In December 1986 the Acting Chief Ombudsman, John Robertson informed CAFCA that he indicated to the OIC that "the approach being adopted by the Commission does not in my view accord with the spirit of the Official Information Act." ('Battling', 1988) In July 1987 the new Ombudsman, Nadja Tollemache, wrote back to CAFCA to highlight that the OIC have adopted new procedures for dealing with applications including the production of a "decision sheet" for each application which would

include most of the information CAFCA had specified. The adoption of these new procedures meant that CAFCA had succeeded in changing the processes of a government department.

The OIC agreed to “test” each month’s decision sheets in terms of the Official Information Act, but signalled it intended to charge CAFCA \$400-450 a month (‘Battling’, 1988). Such charges threatened to make CAFCA unfinancial in six months (B. Ansley, 1989a). Following an appeal, the Ombudsman³¹ decided that while the OIC could charge a group like CAFCA at around this level, it also found that because the OIC was run by the Reserve Bank it doesn’t incur any expenses and it could not charge for expenses it had not incurred (Arthur, 1989; Horton, 1990; B. Jesson, 1990). Surprised by the decision it could not charge anything at all, the OIC sought a judicial review of the Ombudsman’s decision in the High Court. Yet before the court case could begin, the Government rushed through legislation that made it legal for the OIC to charge CAFCA. As the OIC withdrew their legal action, CAFCA were awarded costs. CAFCA was able to pay its legal expenses and use the remaining money to pay for a year’s worth of decision sheets from the OIC (‘OIC’, 1990). The amounts charged by the OIC had also since reduced as a change in the threshold for screening meant that the OIC was now processing fewer applications. The OIC also agreed to give CAFCA all decision sheets from September 1987 to November 1989 free of charge. Obtaining this previously hidden information was a significant victory for CAFCA.

As CAFCA were now the sole source of this information, a number of news organisations began to pay CAFCA for copies of the OIC decision sheets. At various times, CAFCA were reselling, at a nominal cost, the decision sheets to *The Independent*, *New Zealand Property*, *Mountain Scene* and *The Listener*. While the *Christchurch Star* decided at an editorial level that it would be “unethical” to buy material from a group like CAFCA, it decided to buy the decision sheets each month from the OIC, which reduced CAFCA costs as OIC labour costs were then shared (Horton, 1992a; B. Rosenberg, personal communication, 11 September 2021).

Yet there were more attempts to shut the door on OIC information being made public. In April 1990 CAFCA received a phone call from a journalist who informed CAFCA that the Parliamentary Opposition Research Unit had asked him to tell CAFCA that a bill had been introduced into the house that would allow the OIC to withhold information once again, effectively reversing the onus included in the Official Information Act that information must be

³¹ The government did not reappoint the Ombudsman. Justice Minister Doug Graham claimed she got “emotionally involved” in investigations (‘Dirty Doug’, 1992).

released unless there was a good reason to withhold it (Horton, 1990). The amendment was introduced by the Minister of Finance, David Caygill, as part of the Law Reform (Miscellaneous Provisions) Bill. It is a mark of CAFCA success that CAFCA provoked the government to introduce specific legislation. Attempting to explain the need for the amendment on the Holmes Show on TVNZ the Minister said that he believed it was untenable that an organisation could obtain every decision made by the OIC (Horton, 1990).

CAFCA strongly opposed the amendment in a press release and in a submission to the Parliamentary Select Committee hearing the bill.

“It seems a remarkable coincidence that such legislation should be brought before Parliament just as the work of the Commission is at last being made public. The appearance is of a Government embarrassed at the extent of the overseas takeover and wishing to hide the facts. In addition, the decision sheets show the Commission doing minimal investigation into many of these important transactions. Public scrutiny is essential” (Horton, 1990).

The amendment was shelved when the Bill was reported back to the house in June 1990, where CAFCA's submission was noted in a speech to Parliament by Bill Dillon (*Law Reform (Miscellaneous Provisions) Bill*, 1990, sec. Report of Justice and Law Reform Committee).

The government made another attempt to close the door opened by CAFCA in 1995, with a proposed amendment to protect all information relating to an investment application from public disclosure, threatening publishers with a large fine or even jail time (Kelsey, 1995, pp. 108–109; B. Rosenberg, 1995b). Rosenberg (1995b, p. 4) noted the Bill could “truthfully be subtitled ‘the anti-CAFCA Bill’ because it clearly aimed at stifling our annoying efforts to expose the weakness of the OIC and the current overseas investment legislation”. The secrecy clause was also opposed by the Chief Ombudsman and Sir Kenneth Keith of the Legislation Advisory Committee (Horton, 1995c, p. 2). Once again the government shelved these proposals and fell back to the confidentiality provisions of the Official Information Act (‘Call to Dump Investment Bill’, 1995; Kelsey, 1995, pp. 108–109).

CAFCA's five-year campaign to force the OIC to operate with greater transparency represented a significant contribution to political debate on foreign investment issues in New Zealand. According to journalist Greg Ansley (1989) the dogged determination of the Commission to keep its work secret was matched by the dogged determination of CAFCA to make it public. While the Minister had balked at the idea that CAFCA could assess every decision made by the OIC, this became the research basis of the CAFCA project and helped to build CAFCA's relationship with the news media. This material also became a regular source of material for

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Foreign Control Watchdog, in which Bill Rosenberg provided an analysis of the latest OIO decisions in every issue, and which formed the basis of a database, which later became a well-used feature of CAFCA's website. In one early example, a *Christchurch Star* journalist, Don Grady, had been investigating a proposed tourist development in the Marlborough Sounds for several years, but had not been able to find out the name of the Japanese company behind the development for 20 months because the developers refused to name them. The name of the company, EIE International Corporation (EIE), was first released to CAFCA in the March 1990 decision sheets from the OIC (Horton, 1990). This allowed the identification of the EIE's other assets in Australia and New Zealand. CAFCA provided Grady with "extensive international and domestic material on EIE" and the resulting story was syndicated around the country, including the NZ Herald in Auckland (Horton, 1992a). While Land Information New Zealand (LINZ) has also published some of this information from the OIC on its website since November 2006 (CAFCA, n.d.), it is highly unlikely LINZ would have done so if CAFCA had not already forced this information out into the public domain.

A senior business journalist highlights the OIO material as being the most useful for their work;

"from time to time I will still use that database CAFCA has got on the web. I have used it in various stories about different millionaires or well-known people buying things, and you want to know what else they have bought, and so you can go and look at that. So it has been quite useful from that point of view." (C. Hutching, personal communication, 21 December 2015)

Geoff Bertram highlights CAFCA's role of acting as a journal of record on the relationship between New Zealand and foreign capital.

"its greatest strength is the quality of its research, and its long term approach to its research. CAFCA for example has documented month by month, year by year, the decisions coming out of the Overseas Investment Commission, nobody else has maintained a record on the decisions on foreign capital except CAFCA, so if you want to know what has gone on over the last 20-30 years in terms of foreign investment getting through the so called regulatory process, you read Watchdog, it is all there in the back of Watchdog. That's a piece of historical archival documentary material that is on a par with the New Zealand Gazette. You go back to find regulations made and orders in council, decisions on foreign investment you go back through Watchdog. They are all there, they are written up with commentary on what they mean, and who is involved and they are done well." (G. Bertram, personal communication, 21 January 2016)

By identifying an issue and sticking with it, Gillian Southey (personal communication, 5 May 2015) notes CAFCA became recognised as the people who did the research on overseas ownership in New Zealand. In contrast to other groups fighting other social issues in the same

political space, CAFCA had the issue of overseas investment broadly to themselves. This also reflected the high trust other activists had in CAFCA's work, "implicitly trusting the research so nobody needed to do it again", according to activist Leigh Cookson. Cookson also explained the impact of this work on political debate:

"I suspect CAFCA have given voice to people's concerns about issues like who owns land, should people who don't live here be able to own land and if they do what does that look like, they also have I think defined how people understand what a transnational corporate is and foreign investment in that world means, because things that look like New Zealand companies aren't New Zealand companies and so, people who might have been more interested in seeing what the marketed hype have said have actually got information that gives them a clearer understanding. So I suspect our understanding of who owns what and why is broadened by CAFCA. (L. Cookson, personal communication, 5 May 2015)

35. Land Sales

For many New Zealanders the lands of the high country have an iconic status, a status that goes beyond the importance of agriculture in the New Zealand economy. In a sense all New Zealanders feel they own the high country (McIntyre, 2008, p. 336), from those who see it as a place for recreation, to those who feel pride at the rugged South Island landscapes. The New Zealand poet and writer Brian Turner noted in 1983; "[t]he words "high country" have a romantic ring in this small nation. They seem to symbolise a necessary sense of independence and a spirit of adventure and self-reliance that many believe are strong driving forces in the New Zealand character. It is hard to deny that these attributes are widespread". As Public Access New Zealand (PANZ) spokesperson in 1994, Turner captured this pervasive national sentiment when he declared that "the back of beyond belongs to us all" (Turner, 1994; McIntyre, 2008, p. 336).

As a number of high profile high country stations passed into foreign ownership in the 1990s, other recreation and conservation groups expressed their concerns. (B. Ansley, 2002). As Alan Evans (2001) of the Federated Mountain Clubs of New Zealand (FMC) put it; "when a property is passed over to foreign control, traditional high country farming often stops, access to the mountains beyond can be made more difficult and viable grazing lands can become little more than private game parks for their new absentee 'owners'". While foreign ownership of the high country was not a new phenomenon, there were concerns that the new owners represented a global elite and that pastoral leases were being treated as fashion accessories (McIntyre, 2008; Round, 2009; Horton, 2004g). While one New Zealand owned station put up a sign "Forgive

those that [sic] trespass? Not me. I shoot the bastards” (B. Ansley, 2002), there were concerns that if foreign owners pushed for exclusivity, others would follow suit, and the New Zealand tradition of public access would be undermined.

There has also been significant opposition to the foreign ownership of land among New Zealand’s indigenous Maori people, reflecting the special significance of land in Maori culture (Kawharu, 2015; McIntyre, 2008). Maori led the opposition to the sale of Young Nick’s Head and Matakana Island³² (‘Campaigner Storms Through’, 1993; NZPA, 2002). Kawharu (2015) notes Maori concerns about the foreign ownership of land stem from tikanga³³, in which Maori rights to land are generally sustained by occupation on the land. Many Maori feel strong connections and guardianship responsibilities over land in private ownership, and maintaining relationships with the owners of the land may be more difficult if the owners are overseas (Idem.)

Despite public concern about the amount of New Zealand land, particularly farmland, in overseas hands, successive governments have resisted the call for a register on land ownership that would inform debate about levels of foreign ownership. Government agencies did not begin to record foreign land purchases until 1998 (G. Hutching, 2015). In 1980, an officer in the Department of Lands and Survey said the department “couldn’t hazard a guess” at the total and suggested that “in the light of current events it could well be that we should establish a record”. When asked for a response to these words in Parliament the Minister of Lands in the Muldoon Government, Venn Young, claimed an effective record would not be feasible (‘Question for Oral Answer No. 5’, 1980, p. 5). A call from Federated Farmers for a public register was rejected by Finance Minister Bill English in 2013, where English claimed “obtaining an accurate picture would require information to be collected from every current owner of New Zealand land...this would introduce significant compliance costs.” (G. Hutching, 2015).

In 2013, New Zealand First MP Andrew Williams used parliamentary question time to ask the Minister of Land Information, Maurice Williamson, how much of New Zealand farmland was in foreign hands and cited figures compiled by “independent economist” Bill Rosenberg of CAFCA (‘Question for Oral Answer No. 10’, 2013). In a rather pointed response, Williamson described Rosenberg as a “terribly impartial economist” and suggested his numbers were “a bit shonky” arguing that it was not possible to calculate such a figure as, first, many foreigners who

³² See Chapter 5

³³ Traditional values and customs

buy land later become citizens, and second, because foreigners, after buying land in New Zealand, may have sold it back to a New Zealander, and there is no need to notify anyone when this happens. The Minister also dismissed the idea of an official land register (ibid).

Despite his ministerial colleague maintaining that it was not possible to calculate such a figure, Prime Minister John Key claimed during the 2014 election campaign that only 2 per cent of farmland was overseas owned (G. Hutching, 2015). Bill Rosenberg of CAFCA responded to Key's claim in the *Dominion Post*. Rosenberg noted the statistics on land sales are poorly recorded or incomplete: "You end up with a lot of speculation. The PM talks about 2 per cent of farmland being foreign owned but if you include forestry then that figure is nonsense"(op. cit). In contrast, CAFCA estimated that at least 8.7 per cent, or 1.3 million hectares of New Zealand farmland and forestry is foreign-owned or controlled in 2015, but even this estimate is only based on data up to 2011. While LINZ (2016) began publishing statistics in 2016 concerning the tax residency of people involved in property transfers, this was not the same thing as a register of foreign ownership as being a resident for tax purposes can differ from citizenship or permanent residency status. A private members bill to set up a foreign ownership register was introduced by New Zealand First in August 2016, but was voted down at first reading in December following opposition by the government. In 2017 Green MP Eugenie Sage³⁴ told Parliament:

"There is increasing concern about the extent of foreign overseas ownership of land in New Zealand, and it is very difficult to get accurate information on that. I think the Campaign Against Foreign Control of Aotearoa (CAFCA)—it has fallen on it as a non-governmental organisation, with the limited resources it has, to be the best source of accurate information on the extent of land that has gone into overseas ownership."(Sage, 2017)

The news media have also called upon CAFCA expertise when faced with a lack of available data (Armstrong, 2012; Garner, 2014; J. Weir, 2006). NGOs such as Royal Forest and Bird Protection Society (RFBPS) and the Council of Outdoor Recreation Associations of NZ (CORANZ) have used information collated by CAFCA to analyse the degree of foreign ownership of high-country farmland (RFBPS, 2002). In 2002 RFBPS publicised CAFCA's figures as part of their response to the sale of Young Nick's Head station (NZPA, 2002), while in 2018 CORANZ (2018) called for greater controls on foreign farmland sales, at a same time congratulating CAFCA on its "vigilance and exposure" of the issue. As well as informing debate over levels of foreign ownership, CAFCA have also gained a profile in relation to specific land transactions, such as those involving properties held by the family of Indonesian dictator

³⁴ Following a change of government, Sage became the Minister of Land Information later that year.

Suharto (B. Ansley, 2002; Keast, 1999; Rentoul, 1998) and the application of the Canadian country singer Shania Twain to buy a high country station (B. Rosenberg, 2004a; Espiner & NZPA, 2004; Taylor, 2004; Greening, 2012; Cook, 2004).

In relation to the Twain case, CAFCA's campaign impelled a press release from Federated Farmers (2014) President Dr William Rolleston, who credited the creation of New Zealand's largest ever private land protection agreement to "generosity of foreign investors" in going "massively over" Overseas Investment Office requirements. "In early 2010, the Campaign Against Foreign Control of Aotearoa issued a media release entitled, "Just What Are The Benefits To NZ Of Allowing Shania Twain To Buy High Country Stations?" I think they've now got their answer".

While Federated Farmers appear to have taken a more forthright position in favour of foreign investment under Rolleston's leadership, his immediate predecessor as President, Bruce Willis, reported that farmers have strongly divergent views on the issue (A. Wood, 2013). In 1989, the Federated Farmers conference reaffirmed its opposition to foreign ownership of New Zealand farmland (B. Edwards, 1989). Bill Rosenberg remembers travelling to Blenheim to talk to farmers about the implications of the Uruguay Trade round and getting quite a friendly reception (B. Rosenberg, personal communication, 20 January 2016). In 1995 the North Canterbury branch of Federated Farmers invited Murray Horton to speak to its monthly meeting on the proposed Overseas Investment Amendment Bill, and a Waikato sub-branch rang Horton for "information and help" (Horton, 1995b). In their subsequent submission to the select committee Federated Farmers opposed the bill and called for a requirement for foreign investors in farmland to "live on and farm the land" saying they would be welcome if "they get their hands dirty" ('Federation against Bill', 1995; Robertson, 1995).

Murray Horton told Listener journalist Rebecca Macfie (2010) how a "grizzled old cockie" had summarised the views of farmers about the matter. The 'cockie' told Horton that "Farmers attitudes to foreigners buying New Zealand land depends on whether the farmer is buying or selling."

36. Land Sales: Lilybank

The case that really spurred the debate over foreign ownership of the high country concerned Lilybank Station, situated in a particularly picturesque spot near Lake Tekapo in the South Island (B. Ansley, 2002). In 1992 Lilybank was purchased by the son of the Indonesian President

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Suharto, Hutomo Mandela Putra, also known as 'Tommy' Suharto. The new owner, with OIC approval, eschewed sheep in favour of turning Lilybank into an exclusive hunting lodge and safari experience for wealthy guests. In March 1993 CAFCA exposed the sale in its write-up of the decisions of the OIC ('Action', 1999; B. Rosenberg, 1993). In the next issue of *Watchdog*, CAFCA highlighted the attempts of Suharto's manager to bar traditional deerstalkers from the property. He described such deerstalkers as "poachers" ('Forgive Thy Enemies: Indoamnesia', 1993). Access for trampers, hunters and recreationalists was also regularly denied (RFBPS, 2002). The new owners also fought, unsuccessfully, the completion of a deal made in the 1970s that saw the return of the majority of the station to public ownership (B. Ansley, 2002).

In 2004 Transparency International named President Suharto as one of the most corrupt leaders ever, allegedly embezzling up to \$35 billion in a country with a GDP of less than US\$700 per capita (Hodess & Transparency International, 2004). Under his long rule of Indonesia from 1968 to 1998, members of his family were regular beneficiaries of his patronage (Greenlees, 2008). In August 1994, Horton wrote to the *New Zealand Farmer* magazine, "one day Indonesia will have a democratic government looking to recoup ill-gotten gains. How embarrassing if the spotlight falls on the MacKenzie Country." (Horton, 1994a).

In 1998 May CAFCA called on the New Zealand government to utilise a new international law that allowed the seizure of assets bought with dirty money and hold the station and any other assets linked to the Suharto's until it was established they were legitimate. A spokesperson for Foreign Minister Don McKinnon said seizing the station could amount to legalised theft (Rentoul, 1998). In September 1999 the Overseas Investment Office approved the sale of Lilybank to Alan Poh of Singapore for a token sum of \$1. In a leading front page item in the *Christchurch Press* Murray Horton called for the sale to be frozen and asked the government to investigate whether Lilybank "had simply been transferred to cronies", as the same Alan Poh had been Tommy Suharto's business partner when he bought Lilybank in 1992 (Keast, 1999; Horton, 2002a). Following the election of the Labour-Alliance government in New Zealand in October 1999, CAFCA wrote to MPs and called for a select committee inquiry looking at the New Zealand assets of Indonesia's former ruling family (Horton, 2000a).

In 2000 CAFCA hosted a conference in Auckland with the newly formed Indonesian Human Rights Committee, "Towards Democracy in Indonesia; Seize New Zealand Suharto Assets", with Marie Leadbeater acting as a primary organiser in Auckland. The guest speaker was Dr George Aditjondro, a world-renowned researcher on the Suharto's global financial empire. While attendance was less than the organisers hoped, the politicians forum included the Minister

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of Foreign Affairs, Phil Goff, the Associate Minister of Foreign Affairs, Matt Robson, and the Greens foreign affairs spokesperson, Keith Locke. Locke announced he had convinced the Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade Select Committee to hold an inquiry into the role of human rights in foreign policy and urged CAFCA to make a submission regarding the assets of the Suharto family in this context. CAFCA later did so (Horton, 2000a).

A few weeks later, Goff visited Indonesia and met with the Indonesian President Abdurrahman Wahid and his Foreign Minister, Dr Alwi Shihab. Goff offered the Indonesian Government help if it “wished to take action against those who are holding assets in New Zealand that were gained as a result of corruption” (Bingham, 2000). In May, Goff sent the Indonesian government a list of Suharto family assets in New Zealand, along with copies of relevant media stories and press releases. CAFCA later found through the use of the Official Information Act that this material included CAFCA’s call for the assets of the Suharto’s to be seized (Horton, 2000a). On November 30 it was announced that Lilybank could be sold to North American interests. CAFCA questioned whether the government would lose its opportunity to investigate the former owner if the sale went ahead. Goff dismissed these concerns as “nonsense” and claimed the Indonesian government had not pursued the issue following his offer of assistance.

In following the case since 1993, CAFCA acted as the journal of record on Tommy Suharto’s investments in New Zealand. The role of CAFCA and FMC’s Alan Evans in pursuing and documenting the purchase of Lilybank Station by Tommy Suharto was noted by legal academic and former National Party candidate David Round (2009) in the *Canterbury Law Review*. Even the OIC took notice. When CAFCA requested the complete Lilybank file in 2001, it became apparent that the OIC had filed away a significant amount of what CAFCA had written about the case, with some paragraphs underlined for emphasis (Horton, 2002a). In *The Listener*, Bruce Ansley wondered how the OIC had approved the purchase of Lilybank in the first place:

“How this deal advanced the ‘national interest’, as it is required to do under OIC rules, remains puzzling. Certainly official correspondence obtained by CAFCA indicates considerable government embarrassment.” (B. Ansley, 2002)

In August 2000 Aziz Choudry of GATT Watchdog travelled to Indonesia and met with the Indonesian Attorney General, Marzuki Darusman. Choudry also gave Darusman copies of CAFCA’s submission to the Foreign Affairs Select Committee and relevant OIC material (Choudry, 2000). The Attorney General asked Choudry to pass on a request for CAFCA to compile a list of Indonesian investors in New Zealand known to be related to the Suharto regime

and a list of their holdings. This was compiled by Bill Rosenberg (2000), the material also appearing in Watchdog and on CAFCA's website.

CAFCA's long campaign to uncover and document assets held by the Suharto family represents a unique contribution to political debate both in New Zealand and Indonesia. Writing in Watchdog in December 2000, Aziz Choudry notes:

"it seems likely that without the research and campaigning efforts of CAFCA, George Aditjondro and others, none of this would have come to light in the first place. The New Zealand government says it is ready to help the Indonesian government but that no request has been made. The Indonesian Attorney General believes that his government has requested help but not received much in the way of official documents and guidance as to the avenues that may be available to pursue the matter under New Zealand law." (Choudry, 2000)

While CAFCA's long campaign led to some successes, most notably influencing government action in two countries, CAFCA also noted that despite attracting high-powered participants, the conference in April 2000 was not attended by as many participants as the organisers hoped. This touches on issues covered in Chapter 5 concerning potential weaknesses of CAFCA in terms of acting as a national organisation outside of their Christchurch base, and the potential benefits of more international work.

37. Recognition of CAFCA by government officials

When Bill Rosenberg joked that CAFCA might be the most quoted but least referenced organisation in New Zealand one example in particular example stuck in his mind. In 2000 Rosenberg spent his Christmas holidays researching Hong Kong investment in New Zealand for a book critical of a proposed New Zealand-Hong Kong free trade and investment agreement. 'Globalisation by Stealth' was published by the Action Research and Education Network of Aotearoa (ARENA) in March 2001 (B. Rosenberg, 2001a, personal communication, 20 January 2016). In 2003 a government agency, Investment New Zealand (now a division of New Zealand Trade and Enterprise) developed a working paper looking at inflows and outflows of foreign investment in relation to Hong Kong (Gupta, 2003). The appendix of this working paper, a table listing Hong Kong investment in New Zealand, was lifted in its entirety from 'Globalisation by Stealth'. While 'Globalisation by Stealth' was listed as the source, there was no attribution for the author, ARENA or CAFCA, despite Rosenberg using the title 'Hong Kong investment in New Zealand as notified by the OIC to CAFCA between December 1989 and September 2000' (B. Rosenberg, 2001a, p. 54). That said, other public servants have publically acknowledged the

contribution of 'Globalisation by Stealth'. The Secretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Neil Walter, responded to criticisms of the consultation process concerning the Hong Kong agreement to highlight that a summary of Rosenberg's work had been presented to Cabinet.

"ARENA's views have featured prominently in the debate about a number of issues central to the negotiations with Hong Kong. Not only has my ministry circulated the detailed submission by Bill Rosenberg...but Dr Rosenberg also accepted MFAT's invitation to vet the summary of that submission before it was presented to Cabinet and published as a resource for further consultations."
(Walter, 2001)

Just how much CAFCA material has been passed internally within the public service not likely to be ever quantified in a meaningful way³⁵. In 1985 the SIS indicated material it held on CAFCA had made its way as far as the Prime Minister and foreign intelligence agencies.

"The activities of CAFGINZ or its individual members and its publications have been the subject of Service correspondence with the Prime Minister, Ministries of Foreign Affairs and Defence and with overseas liaison services." ('CS1', 1985b)

At this point it is worth noting that materials collected by the SIS on CAFCA do not just pertain to matters of 'security' but also cover CAFCA's criticisms of Comalco, foreign investment and the presence of the Soviet fishing fleet in New Zealand waters (CORSO, 1977; 'Russian Vessel Picketed', 1977). The 'SIS file' also notes CAFCA involvement and leadership in organising protests at political party conferences and the meeting of the Pacific Basin Economic Council (PBEC) in Christchurch in May 1977 (P. L. Molineaux, personal communication, 6 May 1977, personal communication, 23 July 1979). The efforts of CAFCA to obtain and release its own SIS file will be discussed further below.

Other government bodies have also noted CAFCA's work. Given CAFCA's long "annoying" efforts to expose the weakness of the OIC and the current overseas investment legislation, it would be expected that the OIC would not be disposed to acknowledge the role played by CAFCA. In May 1998 the Secretary of the OIC, Stephen Dawe, sent a personal email to Bill Rosenberg commenting that he had just read Rosenberg's (1997a) chapter in Peter Enderwick's book on foreign investment in New Zealand. While Dawe did take issue with a claim made by Rosenberg that many land sales escaped OIC oversight prior to the 1995 legislation, he

³⁵ In 2009 Treasury rang CAFCA looking for a copy of an article by Geoff Bertram on the banking industry (Horton, 2009d)

nevertheless described the chapter as “fascinating” (S. Dawe, personal communication, 15 June 1998). The 2005 legislation abolished the OIC, and moved its functions to the Overseas Investment Office, run as a unit of LINZ. CAFCA are mentioned in the 2009/12 LINZ Strategic Business Plan in an appendix entitled ‘Encouraging overseas investment in New Zealand’ that attempted to identify ‘communication risks’ with various stakeholders (Mowat, 2009). The OIC notes that CAFCA have a “[s]trong interest in further restricting overseas investment activity. Will make a submission to select committee and actively engage in/try to generate public debate and concern”, and suggests CAFCA be included in LINZ’s stakeholder communications efforts. CAFCA have occasionally met with officials, such as the Treasury official who reluctantly cut short his Christmas holiday in 2003 to meet with Bill Rosenberg in Christchurch to discuss CAFCA’s views on the review of the Overseas Investment Act (Cullen, 2004; Horton, 2004f). In 2018 Treasury actively sought CAFCA’s views once again.

38. Influence on local government

In 1997 CAFCA added to the international and local voices opposing the Multilateral Agreement on Investment (MAI), a draft agreement being negotiated within the OCED that sought to liberalise the treatment of investment between states, and provide for compensation for corporations when governments took actions that affected the profitability of investments. The agreement threatened to have major implications for local government, yet local bodies were not being consulted. In September 1997 Jane Kelsey wrote a paper called “The Multilateral Agreement on Investment: Implications for Local Government”, and GATT Watchdog distributed this widely among local bodies in New Zealand. In November 1997 the Evening Post carried an opinion piece from CAFCA highlighting the dangers of the agreement (B. Rosenberg, 1997b). In Christchurch Leigh Cookson of GATT Watchdog and Bill Rosenberg of CAFCA appeared before a joint Christchurch City Council (CCC) /Canterbury Regional Council committee to discuss the implications of the MAI. Rosenberg was approached by the Chief Executive of the Canterbury Development Corporation (CDC), Chris Pickrill, and encouraged to write a paper to discuss the impacts of the MAI and proposed free trade agreements with Singapore and Hong Kong on Christchurch local government.

In April 1998, Rosenberg and Murray Horton appeared before the City Council’s influential strategy and resources committee. Chaired by a senior councillor, David Close, the committee included the retiring Mayor, Vicki Buck and the soon-to-be-mayor Garry Moore. Rosenberg wrote a briefing paper for the committee, as well as supplying them with Kelsey’s paper and

“The Environment and the MAI”, a November 1997 paper by lawyer Barry Appleton that was presented to a Canadian Parliamentary committee (Horton, 1998a). Pickrell (1998), as head of the CDC, made reference to submissions by CAFCA in his own report, highlighting similar concerns regarding the impact of the agreement on loss of sovereignty, loss of local control, secrecy and unaccountability, and made similar recommendations. While Mayor Buck made it clear she supported foreign investment, she also found the MAI scary, giving the example that if the MAI had been in force in 1997 when the council awarded the city rubbish collection to French multinational Onyx, the council could not have insisted on any conditions such as retaining the jobs of the council’s existing dustmen.

In a subsequent resolution, the city council adopted a policy to ensure trade and investment agreements are “consistent with broader local government social, environmental and economic development policies” and to keep a “watching brief” on the implications of the “MAI or similar projects” (Horton, 2009c). This led the Council to oppose the MAI and proposed free trade agreements with Singapore and Hong Kong. These positions may have also been an historical reflection of more sceptical attitudes towards transnational business in Christchurch as suggested in Chapter 4.

Thus the council announcement in February 2006 concerning the ownership of the Lyttelton Port Company (LPC) came as a shock. The Council intended to obtain, via its holding company, the 31% of shares in LPC it did not already own, with the intention of then selling half the shares to Hutchison Port Holdings of Hong Kong. There had been no prior public consultation, despite this being required by law as the port was classed as a ‘strategic asset’. Public reaction was swift, and CAFCA helped to spearhead the Keep Our Port Public (KOPP) campaign alongside local members of the Greens, Alliance, the Maritime Union, the railway union and local body politicians. Horton and Christine Dann of the Greens acted as media spokespeople. The group launched a petition against the sale and staged a public meeting at the town hall on 10 April which gained wide print and broadcast media attention. KOPP also lobbied members of parliament, leading to five Christchurch government MPs, including two ministers, voicing their opposition to the sale in a joint statement released on the day of the public meeting (Horton, 2006; Steere, 2006). A few days before, the Port of Otago sought to block the deal by acquiring a 10.1% stake and continued to acquire shares through April, while CCC failed to obtain the 75% needed to launch a compulsory takeover. While Horton acknowledges the actions of the Port of Otago acted as the ‘knockout blow’, he maintains the campaigning efforts of KOPP also played a part in stopping the Hutchison deal. As CAFCA often swung against the neoliberal tide, often its

campaigning efforts only managed to blunt, rather than prevent the outcomes it campaigned against. The KOPP campaign is important because it is an example where a campaign spearheaded by CAFCA was successful.

CAFCA continued to monitor the actions of its local council, noting when the CCC quietly shelved its foreign investment policy and attempted to remove other council assets from its list of 'strategic assets' (Horton, 2009c; A. Wood, 2006, 2008). With asset sales again put on the agenda following the 2011 earthquakes, CAFCA regrouped many involved in the KOPP coalition to form 'Keep Our Assets Canterbury' which continues to campaign on these issues.

I will now move to explain CAFCA's lobbying efforts concerning the Overseas Investment Act.

39. Campaigning to strengthen the Overseas Investment Act

As the government considered the Overseas Investment Amendment Act in 1995, Winston Peters, the leader of New Zealand First, a conservative nationalist party in the New Zealand Parliament, spoke highly of the work of CAFCA in a speaking tour of the central North Island in May 1995.

"Here let me first acknowledge the heroic efforts of the Campaign Against Foreign Control of Aotearoa (CAFCA), and a certain few journalists, who have worked against the odds, and against a corrupted regime operating in violation of the spirit and clear intention of our freedom of information laws... Only through arduous research by New Zealand First and by the Campaign Against Foreign Control of Aotearoa otherwise known as CAFCA., to whom we are indebted for much of this material - are we even able to gauge the extent to which New Zealand no longer belongs to us.,"(Quoted in Horton, 1997b)

Prior to launching his "New Zealand is Ours" tour, Peter's office asked for CAFCA's help.

Murray Horton explains:

"[Peters] wanted to give examples of foreign ownership in each province, town and city he visited - and his researchers discovered that CAFCA was the only source. We agreed to provide them with our entire OIC database (they would have to sift the raw material) for a price. We were later sent a set of his tour speeches and there was an awful lot of very familiar material in there."(Horton, 1995c)

CAFCA were quick to reiterate their independence from political parties, especially as they regarded Peters as espousing a form of reactionary nationalism that stirred up fear of immigration (Horton, 1996b; 'Which Party', 1995). Perhaps CAFCA best demonstrated this independence two years later when they strongly criticised Peters' actions as Treasurer in the National-NZFirst Coalition government. In one of his most incisive articles, 'Winston's Petered

Out', Horton (1997b) contrasted the actions of Peters as Treasurer with the stance on 'foreign control' Peters had delivered from the pulpit in 1995.

In June 1995, CAFCA organised a public meeting in the Christchurch Town Hall to oppose the changes to the Overseas Investment Amendment Bill. Speakers included Winston Peters, Alliance leader Jim Anderton, Eugenie Sage of RFBPS and Murray Horton of CAFCA. Over 400 people attended on a cold winter's night and passed a resolution calling on the Government to withdraw the Bill and consult the public on new legislation that "ensures New Zealand control of New Zealand's assets and an end to the secrecy surrounding the sales of assets overseas" ('Call to Dump Investment Bill', 1995; Horton, 1995c). The meeting attracted coverage in *The National Business Review* (NBR) (C. Hutching, 1995), *New Zealand Farmer* (McClean, 1995), and *The Press* (Calcott, 1995; 'Call to Dump Investment Bill', 1995) and a subsequent meeting with Peters and Anderton in Wellington, organised by Greypower, gained even wider coverage, including television (Horton, 1995c). CAFCA's submission on the Overseas Investment Amendment Bill was noted in parliament by the Minister, Bill Birch (1995).

While the bill was passed into law, CAFCA pronounced a partial victory with the removal of the secrecy clause³⁶ and welcomed the embedding of the criteria for accepting overseas investment into the Act, even though CAFCA warned such criteria were "extremely weak".

40. Good character: All you need is a letter from your lawyer

Another weakness in the Overseas Investment Act identified by CAFCA concerns the requirement for applicants to be of 'good character'. While some have questioned how the OIC could have possibly have judged Suharto to be of good character (B. Ansley, 2004), the OIC argue this requirement was not in force at the time of the sale, and that the "convictions of Suharto that may have questioned his good character did not occur until significantly after these dates" (Dawe, 2004).

As 'good character' is not defined in the Act, CAFCA highlight how this leads to weak enforcement. In May 1997 CAFCA wrote to the OIC and noted that two people controlling the Wharekauhu Lodge and Farm appeared not to be of good character. They cited a *New York Times* report that one of the directors provided substantial financial support for Renamo, a terrorist organisation in Mozambique.

³⁶ This amendment would have protected information about investments from public disclosure. See Page 78.

"It quoted the U.S. State Department asserting that "100,000 civilians may have been murdered as a result of widespread violence and brutality by the rebel group. Victims were beaten, mutilated, starved, shot, stabbed or burned to death". The second was from Time magazine and which alleged ethically highly questionable, though not illegal, business practices by another director. This article was the subject of legal action and the Time statement on the outcome of the action as far as the director was concerned did not withdraw the allegations."

The OIC responded saying "our enquiries have not revealed any information to refute that [either of the two directors] are of 'good character' as that term is used in the Overseas Investment Act 1973. Accordingly we will not be taking the matter any further." We asked for the reasons for its decision, and a copy of documents relevant to the decision. It supplied them with numerous deletions. While it had "made enquiries" through "other agencies" following our May 1997 letter, it apparently primarily relied on "certificates" by the two directors that were of "good character". Its report on our "allegations" (4 February 1998) stated that "the Commission interprets [the good character condition in the Overseas Investment Act] as requiring a certificate on the eligibility of the applicant company directors who are overseas persons" (CAFCA, 2004)

This correspondence revealed that all the OIC required as evidence of good character was a letter from the lawyer of the applicant stating that the foreign investor was of good character. CAFCA concluded that the "OIC appeared to be taking these statements as the baseline for the truth about these matters, and requiring evidence to "refute" these certificates. It is not clear what investigations it made of the evidence we provided" (CAFCA, 2004).

In their submission to the Select Committee on the Overseas Investment Bill in 2004, CAFCA also highlighted that the requirements for investors only applied at the time of consent.

"Unless an explicit condition is attached to a consent, an individual investor could subsequently exhibit bad character, poor business practice, lack of sufficient financial backing, and so on, without any review of the approval being possible." (CAFCA, 2004)

Another weakness identified by CAFCA is that the 'good character' requirement only applies to individuals and not corporate bodies, despite the existence of corporate 'bad boy' laws in jurisdictions like the United States and corporate manslaughter laws in the United Kingdom (CAFCA, 2004).

41. Attempting to sway a new Overseas Investment Act

In 2003, a review of the Overseas Investment Act began behind closed doors, led by officials in Treasury. An insider informed CAFCA of the review. CAFCA then tipped off the media and gained front page stories in the *Dominion Post* and *Nelson Mail* (NZPA & Clark, 2003; Venter,

2003). Later that day, Finance Minister Michael Cullen announced a review of all aspects of the overseas investment regime, indicating that the government was considering greater protection under the Act for iconic sites; "The review, in terms of approvals, will focus on the areas which have caused most concern: sensitive land [especially South Island high country and coastal land]; cultural and heritage issues and the monitoring process." (New Zealand Government, 2003). CAFCA gained further media coverage in the day following the announcement, with Horton being interviewed by TV3, Radio Pacific and Radio New Zealand. Rosenberg appeared on RNZ's *Nine to Noon* programme and was contacted by journalists from the *New Zealand Herald*, *The Press*, *Sunday Star Times* and the *Independent*, as well as international media agencies such as *Agence France Presse* (Horton, 2003b). In his 'Organisers Report' later that year, Horton commented on the media attention: "Obviously the journalists know where to come when they want to talk to experts on the subject, and ones with a clearly articulated viewpoint quite different to the official line. It also helps that we've been consistent for decades, through all the twists and turns of political ideology and economic fashions." (Ibid.)

While CAFCA welcomed the proposals to tighten restrictions on foreign ownership as it applied to land, Bill Rosenberg (2003b) warned the proposal to remove any remaining oversight over company purchases threatened to engulf any benefits from greater protection for land sales. CAFCA believed business sales were of much greater economic, social and environmental significance. Treasury later conceded that having no threshold for company purchases was not feasible in light of public opinion, and a threshold of \$250m was then proposed, a threshold which was reduced to \$100m by Cabinet prior to the introduction of the new Overseas Investment Bill in November 2004 (Horton, 2004e). CAFCA submitted a detailed submission to the Select Committee considering the Bill and utilised its significant records to call for legislation concerning overseas investment to be thoroughly revamped, allowing New Zealand to exercise the right to 'pick and choose' the investments it allowed into the country.

"New Zealand goes to great lengths to ensure that immigrants we allow into New Zealand are suitable – that they have skills, good character, and conform to other criteria – and are in numbers we can make welcome. People differ on whether the criteria should be limited or liberal, but virtually all would agree that we need to have an active policy to control immigration." (B. Rosenberg, 2005)

CAFCA also gave 19 examples of company takeovers valued between the current threshold of \$50m and the new \$100m threshold to show how oversight would be weakened by the proposed bill. In doing so it is likely CAFCA provided the committee with unique information that was

not collated by others. In March 2005 Bill Rosenberg travelled to Wellington to give an oral submission to the Select Committee considering the Bill (B. Rosenberg, 2005). CAFCA's submission to the select committee gained coverage in the *New Zealand Herald* (Taylor, 2005) and *The Dominion* (Kominik, 1995). In the course of the campaign CAFCA also spoke at public meetings in Christchurch in December 2004 and Napier on 22 February (Hodge, 2005). During the second reading of the bill in parliament on 14 June, MP Craig McNair opposed the bill on behalf of the NZ First party drawing heavily on CAFCA material for his speech. While he did not mention CAFCA by name, he highlighted some of the company takeovers that would no longer be subject to legislative oversight and endorsed a recommendation made by CAFCA in their submission.

"I shall read a recommendation by one of the submitters to the Finance and Expenditure Committee. It is a very interesting recommendation, and reads: "The term 'good character' should be defined in the bill. Its definition should reflect court interpretation, but should be wider than criminal convictions, including adherence to common ethical standards and absence of acts that would be illegal in New Zealand, or which have given rise to adverse civil court findings." (McNair, 2005)

While the bill was amended to provide some guidance on applying the good character test, following a recommendation from the select committee (Finance and Expenditure Committee, 2005), the meaning of good character remained undefined in the Overseas Investment Act. While CAFCA may be able to claim some credit for bringing this matter to the attention of the select committee, it is likely that CAFCA did not see the new provisions as much of a win because they believed enforcement on this matter by the OIO was likely to continue to be weak. The OIO continued to rely on statutory declarations from New Zealand based lawyers stating their client was of good character, although it also became standard practice to conduct internet searches of the relevant overseas persons acquiring the investment, and to instigate further inquiries if these searches reveal any relevant factors (McKenzie, 2016, p. 11). While OIO manager Annelies McClure denied in 2012 that the office took declarations at face value, as "we have instituted investigations in the past", Bill Rosenberg said in his experience both the OIO and its predecessor were happy to accept a statutory declaration from applicants or their legal representatives without further checks. "We always found it was inadequate and on the occasion CAFCA made complaints about particular investors, the OIO seemed very reluctant to take them on." (van Beynen, 2012)

The process adopted by the OIO concerning their processes for assessment of 'good character' were again called into question in the Ceol & Muir Inc. (CMI) case. CMI, a company approved by the OIO to purchase rural land, was revealed to be a client of Panamanian law firm, Mossack Fonseca, in papers released by The International Consortium of Investigative Journalists (ICIJ) in 2016. Reporters from ICIJ found some Mossack Fonseca companies had been used for illegal purposes, including fraud and tax evasion (ICIJ, 2016). More questions were raised in Parliament by Labour MP David Cunliffe after Labour Party staff spent half an hour doing their own internet searches and found the individuals controlling CMI faced criminal charges following the pollution of a river in Argentina (Cunliffe, 2016a).

Following these revelations, a Wellington Queens Counsel was tasked with undertaking an external review of the processes adopted by the OIO in assessing the 'good character' of applicants (McKenzie, 2016). The editorial of *The Press* called for a more comprehensive review of the OIO, noting the terms of reference were "very specific and conveniently constrained" ('OIO Review Must Be Broadened', 2016). A senior journalist at the same newspaper, Martin van Beynen, remarked:

"It's curious it should be Labour's David Cunliffe to finally draw sufficient attention to the issue for the Government to order a review. The tireless Murray Horton and Bill Rosenberg, at the Campaign Against Foreign Control of Aotearoa, have been making lack of good character complaints to the OIO, and its predecessor for nearly 20 years. Countless news stories have highlighted the inadequacies of the office. Various governments have known for a long time that the OIO had neither the resources nor the inclination to do thorough assessments of applicants to ensure they are of good character." (van Beynen, 2016)

While it emerged that internet searches concerning CMI raised one relevant matter, the resulting 'Recommendation to Ministers' about the application stated the OIO had conducted internet searches and "found nothing relevant" (op. cit.). To make matters worse, one of the conditions for consent for the New Zealand farm concerned water quality (Cunliffe, 2016a). Despite this, the review found no major flaws in the way the OIO conducted 'good character' assessments, leading Cunliffe to describe the review as a "shameful whitewash" (Cunliffe, 2016b). CAFCA were similarly unimpressed, noting that despite raising concerns over many cases over many years, the OIO had failed to uphold one 'good character' complaint raised by CAFCA.

"Martin van Beynen was spot on with his headline "OIO Useless For A Reason". That reason is quite simple – both the Government and the OIO see its function as being that of a doorman (doormat would be more accurate), a facilitator of the transnational corporations and other foreign applicants."

Definitely not an overseer, regulator or investigator.” (Horton, 2016b)

Bell Gully, a law firm who assist international investors with their OIO applications said that while the review was “unlikely to significantly affect the way the OIO is currently assessing ‘good character’...the assessment of ‘good character’ as part of the application assessment process has already become, and will continue to be, subject to greater scrutiny.”(Petersen et al., 2016). One assumes they are referring to scrutiny by the media and groups like CAFCA.

David Cunliffe took greater interest in CAFCA following his appointment as Spokesperson for Land Information for the Labour Party. In July 2016 he submitted a written parliamentary question to the Minister of Land Information, Louise Upston, asking if she had received any information relating to an investigation by the Ombudsman of complaints lodged by CAFCA against various decisions made by the OIO to withhold material under the OIA (the Minister replied none)(‘Written Question 9286’, 2016). The investigation was launched after the Ombudsman, Ron Patterson, contacted CAFCA in 2015 seeking to meet with a ‘Mr Horton’ who had put in 100 appeals regarding information withheld by the Overseas Investment Office under the Official Information Act (Horton, 2016a). CAFCA appeals all such ‘deletions’ as a matter of course, the most common information withheld was the “consideration” or price paid. CAFCA welcomed the opportunity to meet the Ombudsman because CAFCA had not received any verdicts from the Ombudsman on any of its appeals for several years. The Ombudsman also met with the OIO, which led the OIO to review its procedures and “a revised decision in respect of information withheld from many of the summaries, with acceptance that in many cases the ‘consideration’ or price paid by an applicant for OIO consent, could be released.” (Patterson, 2016). As a result, the OIO released 88 decisions about which material had previously withheld, withholding information on four decisions indefinitely and placing another 16 to be reviewed at a later date. In all, the review by the Ombudsman represented another win for CAFCA in its campaign to promote greater transparency from the OIO.

“With these actions, the OIO has effectively changed its starting position with respect to information that is deemed confidential when a decision summary is released — that is, confidentiality is maintained for a specified period rather than indefinitely. The onus is on applicants to contact the OIO if they consider that there are good grounds under the OIA for continuing to withhold the information after the expiry of the specified period.”

“In April 2016, it advised that as a result of the OIO’s review and the process now in place, CAFCA would no longer automatically request the information from the OIO, or complain to the Ombudsman if the OIO refused a request, but it may do so if the OIO continued to withhold the information for longer than

12 months" (Patterson, 2016, pp. 3–4)

In 2017 the Labour/NZ First government tightened up the rules around foreigners buying farmland³⁷ (Horton, 2020a). There also appears to have been a change in attitude of officials. Horton expressed great surprise when he was contacted by Treasury in 2018 as part of their formal consultation process concerning proposed amendments to the Overseas Investment Act (C. Hutching, 2018). In 2020 the government proposed amendments to introduce a national interest test and to broaden the "good character" test so it not only applied to the individuals who owned or controlled a company, but to the character of the company itself. While the proposals were looser than CAFCA wished, they still represented significant progress on issues that CAFCA had campaigned on for many years (Horton, 2020b).

42. Informing submissions to Parliament made by others

Another way in which CAFCA have acted as a journal of record in New Zealand is as a source of information to inform submissions to Parliament and related bodies. In 2005, CAFCA encouraged its members and supporters to make a submission on the Overseas Investment Bill utilising a template on CAFCA's website. Around 10 people using the template also asked to be heard in person by the select committee, although only one was able to travel to Wellington to do so (B. Rosenberg, 2005). Others making a submission on the Overseas Investment Bill also used CAFCA material, such as the Green Party (Dann, 2005).

A range of individuals and organisations has also cited CAFCA and *Foreign Control Watchdog* in submissions on other topics. These include select committee consideration of free trade agreements (Alcohol Healthwatch, 2015; Mason, 2015; New Zealand Medical Association, 2015; Stevens, 2016; Youth Action Group Manawatu, 2016), the New Zealand Security Intelligence Bill (NZCTU, 2016; Thorby, 2016), the extension of the mixed ownership model (Greening, 2012) and the Savings Working Group (NZCTU, 2010). It should be noted that this is likely to represent a small subset of the citations of CAFCA in submissions made by others, as the New Zealand Parliament only began making public submissions available on its website relatively recently, and only on certain items of business. The use of CAFCA material in submissions was also noted by interview participants. An academic noted how the material

³⁷ Labour also imposed a 'ban' on foreigners buying existing residential properties, though the later could not be imposed on investors from Singapore and Australia due to existing commitments in free trade agreements.

published by CAFCA “provides good useful resources, can be used in making submissions, and so it’s like it’s an indirect effect”(S. Newberry, personal communication, 23 January 2015).

Parliamentarians such as Hone Harawira (‘Question for Oral Answer No. 9’, 2007), Te Ururoa Flavell (‘Question for Oral Answer No. 5’, 2007) and Winston Peters (‘Question for Oral Answer No. 3’, 2004) have cited CAFCA in question time in Parliament.

Prior to the 1999 election CAFCA wrote to all prospective Labour, Alliance and Green candidates providing them with information about the “transnational takeover” of New Zealand and asking them to adopt policies to reverse it. Soon after the Labour-Alliance government entered office that year, Bill Rosenberg and Murray Horton travelled to Wellington to give a briefing to the Parliamentary caucus of the Alliance and the Green parties (Horton, 2000b). These parties were supporting the new Labour-Alliance government.

From 1996 to 2005, Rod Donald acted as CAFCA’s key contact in Parliament. Donald entered Parliament as an Alliance list MP and later became a high profile leader of the Green Party. Both Bill Rosenberg and Murray Horton remember, with some amusement, the countless times Donald contacted CAFCA out-of-the-blue for information while he was on the road. Murray recalls:

“Oh I am just driving into the gate of Bluff Smelter and tell me all about it will you, they have invited me here to come and have a look, and say ok, or I am on top of the hill in East Cape with the people who are leaving on the Hikoi to on Young Nick’s Head or something like this, that was sold, what should I know about this, so Rod was forever regarding us as a sort of unpaid sort of research wing of the Green party. With his death [in November 2005] that stopped, but we have had a perfectly good working relationship with the Greens for years.”
(M. Horton, personal communication, 22 December 2014)

43. Other issues

Participants also noted a number of other issues they associated with CAFCA, for example, the negative consequences of selling former state assets to foreign investors, the closure of significant national industries, and the sale of forestry and fishing assets. Others highlighted the economic, social and cultural consequences of the domination of foreign investors in the banking and news media markets, and the economic and environmental consequences of mining by overseas companies.

One of New Zealand’s leading opponents of corporate-led globalisation, Professor Jane Kelsey, has made use of material published by CAFCA in a number of her publications, to illustrate the

negative consequences of privatisation of the telecommunication and rail networks (Kelsey, 1995, p. 108, 2015, p. 51), actions taken by the Engineers Union members to combat the deunionisation strategy adopted by Telecom (Kelsey, 1997) and the lack of scrutiny provided by the OIC (Kelsey, 1995, p. 108). In terms of the privatisation debate it would be fair to say the contributions by CAFCA have been more significant in terms of debates concerning particular assets rather than any generalised opposition. Yet perhaps one difference between CAFCA and other opponents of privatisation is that CAFCA kept a sustained watch on companies following privatisation. Peter Lusk reported CAFCA were “often in the news” highlighting the deficiencies of the privatised rail network (P. Lusk, personal communication, 3 May 2015). Others highlighted CAFCA’s role in opposing the privatised Telecom. By investigating “individual corporate atrocities” such as Telecom, Leigh Cookson said CAFCA showed “the dangers of privatising communications that should belong to everybody” (L. Cookson, personal communication, 5 May 2015). CAFCA’s criticisms of the sale of rail and Telecom was noted in ‘Te Ara – The Encyclopaedia of New Zealand’ (McKinnon, 2010). Bill Rosenberg thought the campaign against Telecom was quite successful in that it “contributed to the privatised Telecom being seen as an ogre by people” (B. Rosenberg, personal communication, 20 January 2016).

44. Academic Influence of CAFCA

A number of factors would act to minimise the potential academic influence of CAFCA. CAFCA operate outside a recognised academic community, such as a university or other research institution. Nor do they participate in many conferences. Contacts with academics are sporadic and are mainly personal contacts rather than institutional links. By the same token, academics and graduate students are more likely to have an awareness of CAFCA through their own links with activism and awareness of social and economic issues related to their work. Yet the association with activism can also have its downsides, as one academic commentator suggested that academics can be wary of citing people who are perceived as left wing, even though the same people will often cite right wingers (G. Bertram, personal communication, 21 January 2016). There is often a lack of consistency in the citation of CAFCA’s work, which may mean their contribution is underestimated, particularly given the greater use of automatic citation engines, such as Google Scholar, to measure influence. The academic citations of CAFCA’s work reflect these limitations.

As an example, economist Geoff Bertram became aware of CAFCA from the late 1970s as he was researching the Comalco smelter and its impact on the New Zealand economy. He

recognised CAFCA as one of the strongest critics of the smelter, and began to share information with CAFCA where appropriate. While Bertram and Dann's (1981) economic assessment of the smelter was not influenced by the work of CAFCA, a closer relationship appears to have formed over time, with Bertram citing CAFCA material in an unpublished 1991 working paper that provided a cost benefit analysis of the smelter (G. Bertram, personal communication, 21 January 2016). In a 1992 article in the American left-wing magazine *Multinational Monitor* Horton (1992b) gives an account of how CAFCA utilised Bertram's work to complete its own picture of Comalco. In 2006 Bertram (2006, p. 214) cited a Newberry & Rosenberg (2005) article from *Watchdog* examining the history of Contact Energy in New Zealand in a book chapter reviewing the restructuring and privatisation of the New Zealand electricity sector between 1984 and 2005. CAFCA's credibility amongst academia derives from the longevity of the organisation. In October 1977 Bill Rosenberg was invited by CORSO take part on a panel discussion on foreign investment in New Zealand, alongside Rod Deane, an economist with the Reserve Bank of New Zealand, Allan Langford of the Development Finance Corporation, and Brian Easton, a lecturer in economics at the University of Canterbury (CORSO, 1977). The discussion was chaired by Kevin McMartin and attracted between 60 and 70 participants (*NZSIS Memorandum: CAF CINZ - Participation in Panel Discussion*, 1977). It is possible this represents the first recognition of Rosenberg's expertise in a semi-academic setting, at least in his CAFCA role. The Christchurch branch of the Security Intelligence Service reported to its head office an assessment of the speakers:

"Whilst EASTON impressed as an accomplished speaker, ROSENBERG did not, being described as hesitant and not good at getting his message across. ROSENBERG initiated mention of Comalco and Mt Davey, his arguments being supported by EASTON. EASTON impressed Source as being conservationist in outlook." (op. cit.)

Given the focus in academia on publishing work in academic journals, it is an irony that CAFCA's most highly cited and influential work in the academic domain is published on the CAFCA website. From 1996 CAFCA compiled and updated a paper on news media ownership in New Zealand (B. Rosenberg, 2008). While versions of Rosenberg's news media ownership paper have appeared in academic journals (B. Rosenberg, 2002, 2009a; B. Rosenberg & Mollgaard, 2010) the version on CAFCA's website has 57 citations listed on Google Scholar. Examples include Hope (2012) and Rankine et al. (2011). Academics and people in the media told Rosenberg this work was greatly appreciated and he heard from "academics of various disciplines that they had used in their teaching and their courses". Former High Court Judge Sir

Ian Barker and Professor Lewis Evans described Rosenberg's paper as "an informative review of ownership changes" in their review of the operation of the New Zealand Press Council (I. Barker & Evans, 2007).

When Rosenberg found time pressures associated with his NZCTU job meant he no longer had time to update the paper, he passed his files onto researchers at the Auckland University of Technology (AUT) in March 2011 who promised to carry on the work. Since 2011 the AUT Centre for Journalism, Media and Democracy (JMAD) have published a yearly update on New Zealand media ownership (Myllylahti, 2015; Myllylahti & Hope, 2011). This is an example of research begun by CAFCA that has been taken up by an academic institution. In one sense, the home of this work has come full circle, as Rosenberg's interest in news media ownership (B. Rosenberg, 1994a, 1994b, personal communication, 11 September 2021) was partly sparked by Wayne Hope's articles in *The Republican* (such as Hope, 1993). Hope and Merja Myllylahti are the current co-directors of JMAD.

CAFCA's successful campaign to force the OIC to be more transparent also influenced academic debates concerning foreign investment in New Zealand. Academics interested in the impact of foreign direct investment in New Zealand have also struggled with the lack of data. The lack of systematic assessment of the impact of foreign investment prompted Peter Enderwick (1997, p. 12) to draw together the 1997 book *Foreign Investment in New Zealand*, in which he invited Bill Rosenberg to contribute a key chapter, "Foreign Investment in New Zealand: The current position". One academic participant suggested the book itself had little impact on debates in the academic community³⁸ (D. Tripe, personal communication, 21 January 2016). According to Google Scholar Rosenberg's chapter on foreign investment has been cited 16 times, but due to the age of the work this could be an underestimate (B. Evans, 2006; Hope, 2012; B. Jesson, 1999a; Su, 2009; B. Wilkinson & Acharya, 2014). Enderwick describes Rosenberg's work as "the most thorough analysis of New Zealand's international investment position currently available" (Enderwick, 1997, p. 12). Bryce Wilkinson also praised the work and asked Rosenberg if he would be interested in updating it for a publication being put together by The New Zealand Initiative (TNZI), a Wellington based business-funded think-tank that grew out of the merger between the New Zealand Institute and the strongly pro-market New Zealand Business Roundtable. Rosenberg turned this offer down primarily because he knew what their line on foreign investment would be, and he didn't want his work used to justify their views, but

³⁸ Rosenberg reports the chapter was used by Dr Bruce Cronin as material in a university course (B. Rosenberg, personal communication, 11 September 2021).

also because he did not have the time to do it (B. Rosenberg, personal communication, 20 January 2016). On another occasion Horton turned down an invitation to speak at a TNZI event.

In the TNZI publication *Capital doldrums: How globalisation is bypassing New Zealand*, Wilkinson & Acharya (2014) give a critique of CAFCA's views alongside a number of citations of their work. Wilkinson gave his impressions of CAFCA in an email to the author.

“There has been no public (or private) friction between us on this issue [of foreign investment] that I am aware of, despite our different perspectives... CAFCA, to its credit, has put considerable effort into trying to inform the public about the best available official statistics on foreign investment in New Zealand. TNZI shares the view that well-informed public is a good thing, so this aspect is a common cause.” (B. Wilkinson, personal communication, 30 November 2015)

For Joanna Scott-Kennel (2004) the importance of understanding the impact of FDI on New Zealand “cannot be overstated” as she sees New Zealand as dependent on external sources of capital for economic growth. Yet Scott-Kennel highlights the “real lack of research on the topic” and claims her 2004 study represents the only major empirical study on New Zealand inward FDI to have been conducted since Roderick Deane in 1970. Noting that firm-level foreign ownership data is not published in New Zealand, Scott-Kennel generated a database by cross referencing secondary data sources, business directories, membership lists of business associations, media reports and approval data from the OIC. Despite holding different views from CAFCA in regards to the value of FDI, Scott-Kennel quoted statistics compiled by CAFCA, “Foreign Control – Key Facts” to demonstrate how the significance of FDI to the New Zealand economy has increased over time. Like Rosenberg's news media ownership paper, the “Key Facts” document lives on CAFCA's website. However similar material has also been covered in *Watchdog* (‘Key Facts’, 1995; Horton, 2002b). David Small (1997) also made use of figures from an earlier version of the ‘Key Facts’ document in article for the International Review of Education. Other academics have also quoted from the “Key Facts” (Lattimore & Ballingall, 2001)

International academics interested in New Zealand data have also looked to CAFCA for relevant information. Human Geographer Michael Woods (2011), based at Aberystwth University in Wales, utilised the OIO decisions available on the CAFCA website, for an article examining the impact of overseas ownership of rural land in Queenstown.

Several academics contribute articles to *Watchdog*, including Geoff Bertram, Jane Kelsey, Brian Easton and Sue Newberry. Wolfgang Rosenberg made regular contributions to *Watchdog* until

the late 1990s. While some articles cover material published elsewhere, some academics also use *Watchdog* as a means of putting on record work that is unlikely to be published elsewhere. For Geoff Bertram, *Watchdog* is “probably the ideal place these days if you want to write something progressive from an academic perspective and get it published. Murray will carry it” (G. Bertram, personal communication, 21 January 2016). Some academics then cite their own *Watchdog* articles in academic publications. For example media studies academic Peter Thompson cited an article he wrote for *Watchdog* in *Global Media and Communication* (Thompson, 2012b) and in a book published by AUT (Thompson, 2012a).

Watchdog articles written by those with peer-reviewed publications are more likely to be cited by other academics. While Bill Rosenberg has picked up a number of citations of his CAFCA work, there are conspicuously fewer citations of Murray Horton, perhaps a reflection of his more journalistic style of writing, however Horton's work has appeared in a couple of theses. Horton (1998c) highlighted how the military, police and SIS held the largest ever anti-terrorism exercise in New Zealand history in preparation for the 1999 APEC Leaders' Summit in Auckland, a point that was cited in the PhD of Christine Dann (1999). Bryn Evans cited Horton's (2002b) article, 'Who is running the show? And what we can do about it', in his Masters thesis (B. Evans, 2006). Horton's piece covered similar ground to CAFCA's 'Key Facts' publication. Horton's popular obituaries have also gained academic and other citations (Birchfield, 2009; Boraman, 2016; Shaw, 2010; Zelko, 2013). Another prolific *Watchdog* writer, Dennis Small, gained a citation in the doctoral studies of Sodany Tong (2015).

The material compiled by CAFCA has also been cited in New Zealand based doctoral and masters theses over a range of disciplines. These include Asian Studies (Shaw, 2010), Business (Su, 2009), Communication Studies (B. Evans, 2006; Stephenson, 2003), Economics (Tong, 2015), Environmental Management (Dann, 1999), History (Fox, 2001; M. Simpson, 2007), International Relations (Le Quesne, 2011) and Political Studies (Carrapatoso, 2007). Other theses have also discussed CAFCA (Bradford, 2014; Carrapatoso, 2007; Choudry, 2008; B. Edwards, 2003; K. R. Matthews, 2018; M. Simpson, 2007).

My own *Foreign Control Watchdog* articles (J. Hendren, 2004a, 2005) have been cited in a variety of places, including a book on democratic policing in developing countries (Mullick & Nusrat, 2006), a book highlighting the plight of Iraq's intellectual culture following the 2003 Iraq war (Adriaensens, 2010) and work by New Zealand based academics examining the relations between New Zealand and China (Beal & Kang, 2016; Brady, 2008).

Academics have also made use of CAFCA material in their teaching (P. Hyman, personal communication, 2 May 2015). In October 1993 students at the Department of Economics at the University of Waikato were asked to respond to a quote from Murray Horton as an exam question: “Multinational companies [have] no allegiance to individual countries, making and selling their products wherever it [is] more beneficial to them” (University of Waikato, 1993). As the exam paper sourced the quote from the local newspaper, *Waikato This Week* (Gleeson, 1993), this suggests this unusual example of academic influence came as a result of Horton’s 1993 speaking tour.

As well as the example from the TNZI discussed above, other proponents of trade liberalisation have also referred and discussed CAFCA’s work. In 2001 the newly formed lobby group the New Zealand Trade Liberalisation Network (NZTLN) commissioned the NZIER to prepare a public resource base to promote “understanding and support for the concept of trade liberalisation in the private sector and the community.” In part this was a response to the “large amount of media coverage gained by anti-trade reform activists.” (Lattimore & Ballingall, 2001, p. 1). The concern over media coverage is most likely to refer to the high profile protests in Seattle sparked in opposition to the World Trade Organisation (WTO) Ministerial Conference of 1999 (also known as the Battle of Seattle). Yet the NZTLN Resource Base also included discussion of comments made by Jane Kelsey, Bill Rosenberg and CAFCA, as well as New Zealand political parties sceptical of trade liberalisation (the Greens and the Alliance). These citations suggest the NZTLN also felt they needed to respond to local critics of trade liberalisation. It is interesting there was no mention of anti-APEC group GATT Watchdog or its soon to be successor organisation ARENA despite the profile of Leigh Cookson and Aziz Choudry (2008) in relation to trade issues around the turn of the century.

45. Increasing access to Security Intelligence Service files

Just as academics utilise OIO information CAFCA forced into the public domain, CAFCA also made a contribution in forcing more New Zealand Security Intelligence Service (SIS) files into the open. The secrecy around SIS files had been a source of frustration for many academics and researchers. In 2002 the Canterbury political scientist, Anne-Marie Brady, organised a letter to the Prime Minister Helen Clark, signed by thirty one political scientists and historians, calling for a review of access to SIS records, noting that “New Zealand is unique among its close allies in denying access to the archives of its intelligence services. Indeed, the archival policies of much of the former Soviet bloc are currently more open and unrestricted than those of New

Zealand.” (Brady, 2002). Brady sought historical SIS files through the Official Information Act to inform her research concerning relations between New Zealand and China during the Cold War but found it to be a “farce”, where the SIS “set up a process where the outcome will always be the same – you can’t get near the information” (Ross, 2002). While the letter led to the adoption of a new policy on access to old files in November 2003, allowing some files greater than 50 years old to be released, investigative journalist Nicky Hagar remarked that even the new policy represented “possibility the most restrictive intelligence archives policy in the western world” (Hagar, 2004).

The SIS first showed an interest in CAFCINZ in 1974 following newspaper coverage of the proposed Resistance Ride (‘CS1’, 1985a; ‘Inside Backing’, 1974). In 1979 the Director of Security, Paul Molineaux (personal communication, 23 July 1979), wrote to National Party Prime Minister Muldoon to advise him of CAFCINZ’s plans to demonstrate outside the National Party Conference. He warned that “CAFCINZ has in the past demonstrated some propensity towards militant action and has been confrontation with the police” (op. cit). CAFCA first sought their SIS file under the Official Information Act in 1985, after it emerged its name appeared in clippings the SIS produced in court as part of the Don Carson case (Arthur, 1985a). In response, the Director of the SIS, John Smith, refused to “neither confirm nor deny” the existence of information held by the service on CAFCINZ on the grounds that disclosure would prejudice the security or defence of New Zealand or the international relations of the Government of New Zealand. In particular Smith feared “that meeting any such require is likely to damage security by making the service vulnerable to a systematic collection plan” (Arthur, 1985a; ‘We’ve Got a File’, 1985). CAFCINZ took the matter to the Ombudsman, but Lester Castle backed the decision of the SIS to “neither confirm nor deny”(Arthur, 1985a).

The SIS took a particular interest in groups and individuals such as CAFCA who called for the abolition of the SIS. In September 1985 CAFCA held two one day seminars to mark the 10th anniversary of the death of Bill Sutch. The first seminar focused on Sutch’s economic ideas, particularly in contrast to the neoliberal policies being pursued by the Forth Labour government. The second seminar focused on the role of the SIS, including a keynote by Hugh Price of the New Zealand Council for Civil Liberties on “Why the SIS should be abolished” and contributions from Owen Wilkes, Richard Suggate and Don Carson. The SIS added media coverage of the seminars to CAFCA’s SIS file (Arthur, 1985b; ‘Campaign Seeks S.I.S Inquiry’, 1985; ‘SIS Inquiry Call’, 1985; Grant, 1985).

CAFCA's Contribution to Political Debate

In December 1985 the SIS compiled an assessment of current campaigns against the SIS by CAFKINZ and the Socialist Action League ('CS1', 1985b). The SIS noted how CAFKINZ and its leading personalities had a long standing involvement in protest activity against the SIS including "protest and harassment activity against service premises in Christchurch in the mid-to-late 1970s" and acting as a "leading force" in the formation of the Coalition Against the Security Intelligence Service (CASIS) in August 1980. They noted the influence and ability of Owen Wilkes in particular ('CS1', 1985b; 'Protest against S.I.S', 1980).

"For a variety of reasons, the temperature appears to be rising in anti-SIS feeling over recent months. CAFKINZ appears to be taking the lead and this may be because of WILKES personal vendetta as much as CAFKINZs need to find a new issue on which to focus, now that the nuclear free and anti-ANZUS issues have become more widely popular and self-sustaining. WILKES brings a sophistication to anti-SIS activity that has not been much in evidence in the past. His Scandinavian experience has already been evident in CAFKINZ and PRI activity and there is, as yet, no reason to disbelieve that the type of information gathering techniques WILKES claimed were being used against GCSB and Defence (irrespective of their success) were not in fact undertaken and could not be used against this Service. The failure, by CAFKINZ and others, to achieve any measure of success against the Service via the OIA does not appear to have dampened their enthusiasm." ('CS1', 1985b)

CAFCA did not receive its SIS file for another 24 years, but when it did arrive it was another prize for persistence. A 2006 book by a former SIS agent, Christopher Horton Bennetts, repeated allegations that Bill Sutch was a Soviet spy, challenging the acquittal of Sutch on espionage charges in a jury trial in 1975. One of the lawyers involved in Sutch's defence was Bill Rosenberg's brother, George Rosenberg. The publication of Bennetts' book led George Rosenberg to seek his personal SIS file. This file revealed that Bill Rosenberg had been subject to SIS surveillance between 1968 and 1998 (Horton, 2009a). Bill Rosenberg then acquired his own file, and encouraged all people named in his file to apply for their files.

CAFCA also renewed its efforts to obtain the file held by the SIS on CAFCA as an organisation. As a first step they asked the SIS for a list of the contents of their file. Somewhat to their surprise, the Director of the SIS Warren Tucker helpfully replied "we can do better than that" and offered CAFCA copies of the actual documents (Horton, 2009a). CAFCA were only able to apply for their file because they were recognised as a "legal person" as an incorporated society. In 2009 Horton said he believed CAFCA were the only organisation to have received their file; others were rebuffed on the grounds they lacked the authority to make a request on behalf of an organisation.

The file held by the SIS was not completely dedicated to CAFCA; its full title was “Protests miscellaneous: Influence on by subversive organisations: Campaign Against Foreign Control in NZ (CAFCINZ)” (W. Tucker, personal communication, 30 October 2008). The file had begun in 1965 and at first focused on protests against foreign military bases in New Zealand, such as those organised by CAFCINZ precursor organisation, CAFMANZ.

The release of the file to CAFCA generated media coverage, particularly in the *Christchurch Press* (‘Editorial: Return of SIS Files’, 2009; van Beynen, 2009b, 2009a, 2009c). The release of the file was also welcomed by Green MP Keith Locke in Parliament, who noted that the surveillance of himself, CAFCA and others was “completely unjustified” in terms of the law covering the SIS: “It should have been watching only people involved in treason, espionage, and terrorism, but, in the interests of the Government of the day, it has been countering the activities of campaigners.” (K. Locke, 2009). In an editorial *The Press* attempted to offer some justification for the surveillance and downplayed its significance:

“To judge from the file on CAFCA that Horton has obtained, the SIS's interest in the organisation does not seem to have been very great and appears to have been at its height during protests and such, when there might have been the possibility of legitimate security concerns” (‘Editorial: Return of SIS Files’, 2009)

46. Contribution of CAFCA to international debates

While CAFCA do have relationships and contacts with similar groups overseas, the visibility of CAFCA outside of New Zealand is very limited. Interview participants now based in Australia reported there was no real awareness of CAFCA in Australia (T. Currie, personal communication, 4 May 2015; S. Newberry, personal communication, 23 January 2015). There may be some awareness of individuals involved in CAFCA among overseas activists but this was likely to be predominantly on the basis of personal connections rather than organisational links. In 2004, CAFCA and the Roger Award were profiled in *New Internationalist* (NI), an international magazine based in the United Kingdom (Richards, 2004). A 2006 article highlighting how two Australian owned banks had won the 2005 Roger Award for being the worst transnational corporation in New Zealand (Renton et al., 2006). The appearance of these articles may have been due to the interest of then Australasian editor of *NI*, Chris Richards. In 1999, *New Internationalist* publicised CAFCA’s campaign for New Zealand properties owned by family members of former Indonesian dictator Suharto to be seized on the grounds these owners benefited from the actions of a corrupt Indonesian government (‘Action’, 1999). The

Roger Award also inspired an award for the worst transnational corporation operating in Fiji, however this initiative appears to have been short lived (Pacific Network on Globalisation, 2003).

CAFCA's work on forestry ownership in New Zealand has also been cited by Greenpeace International (2004) and in a book published in the UK by Earthscan and the World Wide Fund (WWF) for Nature (Dudley, 1995). Murray Horton's work on forestry was also noted in the acknowledgements of another Earthscan publication, *Plantations, privatization, poverty, and power changing ownership and management of state forests* by Michael Garforth and James Mayers (2005). While *Clearcut: Forestry in New Zealand* (Horton, 1995a) was only published as a small print run of less than 500 in Christchurch, and sold out in March 1998 ('Clearcut Sold Out', 1998), it appears Horton's book had a greater influence than its availability would suggest. Apart from these small examples, perhaps CAFCA's most significant contribution to international debates relates to their work concerning Rio Tinto and Comalco, which I will look at in detail in the next chapter.

47. The contribution of CAFCA to civil society

In forcing the OIC to produce 'decision sheets' that made available information on foreign investment applications that would have otherwise remained hidden behind the corporate veil, and providing valuable analysis of these decisions, CAFCA made a significant and lasting contribution to public and academic debate on overseas ownership. The efforts by CAFCA to uncover and publicise the surveillance of itself and other politically active individuals and organisations by the SIS are other examples.

Earlier I suggested that a study of CAFCA might demonstrate how ideas and information can be transferred through civil society. *The Listener* journalist Bruce Ansley acted as a key outlet for CAFCA material to enter the mainstream media, on issues such as land sales (B. Ansley, 1994, 2002), Comalco (B. Ansley, 1989b, 1993) and gaining greater transparency and openness from the OIC (B. Ansley, 1989a). Ansley, as a capable investigative journalist also published information valuable to CAFCA which was regularly cited in *Watchdog*.

In May 1989 Ansley published a story in *The Listener* about CAFCA's ongoing battle to obtain information from the OIC. He followed this up a week later with a major story on Comalco, demonstrating how Ansley and CAFCA shared similar interests. Bruce Ansley's work on foreign land sales then became a significant source for the historian Roberta McIntyre (2008) in

her history of the South Island high country she completed as a fellow at the Stout Research Centre for New Zealand Studies at Victoria University of Wellington (Victoria University of Wellington, 2016). McIntyre noted how the Royal Forest and Bird Society had used information collated by CAFCA to analyse the degree of foreign ownership of high-country farmland (RFBPS, 2002). She also discussed CAFCA's campaigns on the Overseas Investment Bill and Lilybank and indicated she had sourced Ansley's articles from CAFCA's website. Ansley's brother Greg, also a journalist, covered a number of CAFCA issues for the *Christchurch Star* (such as G. Ansley, 1987, 1989), showing that the interests of friends and family can also influence how information moves through civil society in a small country.

Bertram suggests CAFCA's work on the OIC could be compared to the role played by *I.F. Stone's Weekly*, an independent newsletter produced by the American investigative journalist Isidor Feinstein (I.F) Stone between 1953 and 1971.

Stone's technique as a journalist was not to go to the press conferences and get the blurb with the political spin, he got the transcripts of all the congressional hearings and went through in detail, in the transcript what was being said in the hearings and then took out key passes from the transcripts and put them into his weekly. That way you got a completely different perspective on how the American Government worked from the one that was given out front by the PR machine, and it made Stone probably the most valuable commentator on the insides of American politics of his era. That model of systematically reading the documents and not being thrown by the public noise essentially is what Bill did with the Overseas Investment Commission things, he actually reads the decisions and summarises them and publishes them like that, and that gives you that inside track based on the actual official documents which can't be denied or hidden or anything. You are not relying on somebody's say so, you actually have the written word in front of you, and I think that's the most valuable of all sorts of research in this sort of sphere. (G. Bertram, personal communication, 21 January 2016)

This is a very flattering comparison. In a ranking of the best works of American journalism in the 20th century, compiled by the New York University journalism department, *I. F. Stone's Weekly* appears at No. 16 (Barringer, 1999). Like *Watchdog*, Stone's four page newsletter had an influence beyond its immediate membership or circulation³⁹, though it must be said the worldwide influence of the *Weekly* gave it significantly more influence than *Watchdog* could ever aspire to. *Watchdog* shares other similarities with the *Weekly* with its left wing orientation, its citation of a large number of news sources, conspicuous referencing and a tendency to focus on official documents as sources rather than interviews or anonymous sources. It is a journalism

³⁹ I. F. Stone's *Weekly* had a circulation of 70,000 (Flint, 1989).

that proceeds mainly through the critical analysis of published texts, such as news reports, official documents and other publically available material, unearthing “new facts by publically dissecting and comparing news accounts and other evidence through a lens of a wider media and political critique” (Graves, 2015, p. 100). Lucas Graves (2015) characterises this style of journalism as ‘annotative journalism’ and likens it to the style of 21st century news focused web blogs. Annotative journalism is a good description of a lot of the content included in *Watchdog*. The analysis of the OIC material also served as a research base in which to undertake other work addressing CAFCA’s concerns.

While CAFCA may have never made the association themselves, CAFCA’s style of ‘annotative journalism’ and in-depth dissection of news reports also fits with their most significant specific academic contribution, monitoring and examining the impact of news media ownership in New Zealand, a project that has now been taken up by an academic institution. In this sense CAFCA could be regarded as one of the New Zealand’s most active and long-lived organisations offering a sustained critique of the operation of the media, as well as a critique of foreign control.

Academics interested in foreign investment in New Zealand acknowledge the expertise of Bill Rosenberg on the subject, as evidenced by his invitation to write the chapter for the Enderwick book and the number of citations of this work. CAFCA have also picked up a number of academic citations in over a wide range of disciplines, and have acted as a resource to a number of thesis students working on New Zealand related topics. Academics have also made use of CAFCA material in their teaching and have provided articles to *Watchdog* as a means of placing issues on the public record.

CAFCA have also made a contribution to political debate by addressing gaps in both public and academic knowledge. The longevity of the organisation, the high levels of trust in the material and the disinterest, and in some cases hostility, of governmental authorities to place such information in the public domain created an opportunity for CAFCA to act as a journal of record. As a result CAFCA has made a wide-ranging contribution, related to approvals for overseas ownership, estimates on the amount of foreign owned land, aspects of the debate concerning the consequences of the privatisation of state owned assets, and the behaviour of individual transnational corporations, such as Comalco, Telecom and New Zealand Rail/TranzRail/Toll. The obituaries that appear in *Watchdog* are another example of CAFCA producing unique material that would not otherwise be in the public sphere, particularly as they pay tribute to the lives of ordinary CAFCA members as well as recognised political and economic actors.

CAFCA's Contribution to Political Debate

In her PhD, Christine Dann (1999) cited CAFCA's expose of the 1989 Christchurch conference of the international free market think-tank, the Mont Pelerin Society, because it was the "only account of that organisation...meeting in New Zealand". Founding CAFCA member and renown researcher Owen Wilkes alerted CAFCA to the conference, "impeccably" researching the record of every delegate (Horton, 2005c; 'Participants at Mt Pelerin', 1990).

"Tipped off by the usual high calibre inside information we've come to expect from Owen Wilkes, we had a flying start We had the full background on the MPS, its office holders, featured speakers, its Australasian and international history, and the complete programme for its conference, considering it was supposed to be secret, that was no mean feat." ('Bludgers Prizegiving', 1990)

This was published in Watchdog, alongside an article that reported on the protest organised by CAFCA and others outside the conference, entitled 'Bludgers Prizegiving'. The article was even praised by an attendee at the conference, Alan Wilkinson, as a better account than that offered by the media, "because as usual you dug for facts before applying prejudices - a most commendable combination which I too seek to emulate (A. Wilkinson, 1990)". Wilkinson was critical of the media, and an editorial in *The Listener* in particular, for implying the conference supported the views of the high profile speaker American economist Richard Stroup, who delivered a keynote at the conference. Stroup likened the growing environmental movement to those who wished to bring down the capitalist industrial system in the name of socialism or communism, a position Wilkinson described as "Greens under the bed paranoia" (A. Wilkinson, 1990). While describing himself as a "long-time Watchdog subscriber", he acknowledged that "some of your readers would see me as a capitalist" and outlined some of the political differences he may have with CAFCA. CAFCA printed Wilkinson's 'letter to the editor' in full in Watchdog. This may be one of the few participant accounts of the conference to be published.

The media were not aware of the conference until they were tipped off by CAFCA ('Bludgers Prizegiving', 1990). The conference became a more significant story after one of the speakers, the then Minister of Police and Immigration, Roger Douglas, defied the instruction of Prime Minister Geoffrey Palmer not to discuss issues relating to his former Finance portfolio, and accused his own government of "coasting" on its past economic reforms. In doing so Douglas breached conventions relating to collective cabinet responsibility. In announcing his intention not to stand at the 1990 election in the week leading up to the conference (NZPA, 1989) it is possible Douglas believed he would have little to lose from publicising his personal views. Palmer had only agreed to Douglas speaking on the basis his comments would be private. It is possible this story could have still have been the focus of media attention had Douglas' speech

been leaked irrespective of the actions of CAFCA, but it does seem likely that the alert provided by CAFCA assisted in alerting the media to the importance of the Mont Pelerin gathering.

CAFCA also alerted the wider progressive movement to the existence of the conference, with Greenpeace also gaining media coverage criticising the Mont Pelerin Society ('Economic Reform Criticised', 1989; Jachau, 1989). They then joined unionists, the Communist Party, Socialist Unity Party, Unemployed Rights Centre, health cuts groups, women's groups and aid and development agencies to organise three protests outside the conference. The last protest coincided with the monthly meeting of the Canterbury District Council of the Council of Trade Unions, who voted to adjourn for 30 minutes to join the demonstration.

Those attending the protest had been asked to dress as vampires, with the organisers selling toy vampire fangs, dubbed 'Douglas Dentures', they had bought from DeLarno's Magic Shop, then a Christchurch institution. On hearing they were to be used in a demonstration against Douglas, DeLarno included a free set. "We also decided to give back to these bullshit artists some of the product they'd so generously slung our way over the years", leaving an auspicious box for the Mont Pelerin delegates to inspect on the drive ('Bludgers Prizegiving', 1990). The protest was covered by The Press ('Protests over Monetarists', 1989) and the Radio New Zealand news. The SIS noted this protest in its files (New Zealand Security Intelligence Service, 1989).

While lively and in good humour, the actions of a national civil society organisation like CAFCA in shaping political discourse and mobilising collective interests in reaction to the Mont Pelerin society conference should be regarded as a legitimate contribution to civil society. As should CAFCA's other contributions to political debate discussed above.

While toy vampire fangs and "bullshit" may be unusual items in which to enable 'bonding social capital', it would be wrong to assume such items had no impact on "social connectedness".

In this chapter I have demonstrated means by which a nationally-focused civil society organisation made a discernible contribution to the public sphere in New Zealand. In forcing the OIC to make available information about foreign investment applications CAFCA made a significant and lasting contribution to public and academic debates concerning overseas ownership. CAFCA became recognised for its expertise by the media, and its ability to create a reliable and authoritative journal of record on the subject. Its work that demonstrates how ideas and information may be introduced, transferred and given longevity through civil society in New Zealand.

CAFCA's Contribution to Political Debate

CAFCA also made an important contribution through its ability to sustain long running campaigns. This allowed CAFCA to continue to pursue issues long beyond the fleeting gaze of the newsroom, and to effectively use tools such as the Official Information Act. Perhaps it could be asked what other form of organisation, other than a nationally focused political civil society organisation could have forced the OIC to adopt greater transparency or had the expertise and sources in which to document the holdings of the Suharto family in New Zealand?

Chapter 7: CAFCA vs Comalco

Fiordland National Park, situated in the south west corner of the South Island of New Zealand, is known around the world as an area of outstanding natural beauty. It forms part of the Te Wāhipounamu World Heritage Site - recognised by UNESCO as the best modern example of the primitive flora and fauna of the ancient supercontinent of Gondwanaland (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation, n.d.). Yet only a few years after Fiordland was granted National Park protection in 1952, a proposal emerged to build a large hydroelectric power station at Lake Manapouri. Not surprisingly, the station, and the aluminium smelter which utilises nearly all of its capacity, has attracted controversy and comment ever since.

In Chapter 4 I introduced the Comalco project and the Save Manapouri Campaign (SMC) that opposed the raising of the level of Lake Manapouri. I argued that the success of SMC helped to create a climate of scepticism towards the company upon which CAFCA and other opponents were able to build. Many other groups and individuals have made notable contributions to the debate on Comalco. These include Forest and Bird and the Coalition for Open Government. Academics such as Geoff Bertram and Christine Dann (1981) have questioned the economic case for the smelter and have attempted to assess whether the smelter is an overall benefit or a cost to New Zealand. Journalists such as Fran O'Sullivan (1989, 1993) and Bruce Ansley (1989b, 1993) have also written substantial articles concerning Comalco. The Comalco case is a defining case of Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) as there may not be another example where a foreign company has maintained its investment in New Zealand for such a long period.

Public concerns over the significantly lower power prices paid by Comalco under its agreement with the government led to difficult and prolonged negotiations between the government of Robert Muldoon and Comalco in 1976 and 1977. In 1980, CAFGINZ publicised the contents of internal Comalco documents that detailed how Comalco, during the negotiations, arranged diplomatic pressure on the New Zealand government from the host governments of its shareholders. Some of the allegations made by CAFGINZ in 1980 can now be corroborated by diplomatic communications not available at the time.

In the late 1980s and early 1990s, CAFCA uncovered and published a series of further documents that revealed plans to sell the Manapouri power station to Comalco and raised the question as to what degree New Zealand taxpayers were effectively subsidising Comalco's power price.

In this chapter I will provide a detailed case study of the impact of the release of these documents.

I will explain that while CAFCA were marginalised by politically powerful voices upon release of the documents, the passage of time showed CAFCA were on the right track, permitting the group to make over time a discernable and important contribution to debate on the Comalco issue. I will suggest that, while CAFCA did not have the same impact on the Comalco issue as it achieved elsewhere, their most important and lasting contribution was to act as a journal of record for other civil society participants.

The company have told their side of the story through media appearances, letters to the editor and by commissioning a journalist, Clive Lind (1996), to write a company history, and commissioning external research on the subject of the smelter (W. A. N. Brown & Associates, 1980). Supporters of Comalco point to its contribution to New Zealand's foreign exchange (McDonald, 1975) and the significance of the smelter to Southland - the source of around 800 jobs and other local economic benefits (Austin, 1976; Frykberg, 2016). In 2013 company revenues of \$525 million represent around 10 per cent of Southland's Gross Domestic Product (C. Anderson, 2013).

Yet to CAFCA, the smelter is the textbook example of corporate welfare in New Zealand (Horton, 2012b), and they have consistently called for the smelter to be closed. While CAFCA acknowledge "the smelter has been good for Southland, it is bad for the country" (Horton, 2013c). CAFCA and others have pointed out that if Comalco was not using around 15 per cent of New Zealand's total power, the electricity could be put to other uses and could, in some circumstances, mean lower prices for consumers.

In this chapter I will examine the contribution of CAFCA to these debates. The aim is not to assess the advantages and disadvantages of the smelter investment in New Zealand but to seek to understand and assess CAFCA's role in these debates.

48. Background to the 1977 negotiations

The smelter opened in October 1971, described by then Prime Minister Keith Holyoake as a "tremendous new venture and one of the best examples of international cooperation in the industrial sphere" (Lind, 1996, p. 96). The smelter could be described as a mixture of British, American, Australian and Japanese interests, with the British/Australian multinational Rio Tinto remaining as the cornerstone and controlling shareholder since Consolidated Zinc merged with

Rio Tinto in 1962 to form Rio Tinto Zinc Corporation (RTZ) . In 1971, 58.72% of the shares in New Zealand Aluminium Smelters Ltd (NZAS) were held by Comalco Industries Pty Ltd of Australia (of which RTZ held a controlling stake), with 20.64% owned by the Sumitomo Chemical Company (Japan) and 20.64% owned by Showa Denko Ltd (Japan). As of 2017, Rio Tinto control 79.36% of NZAS, through RTA Pacific Pty Ltd (Australia), with Sumitomo Chemical continuing to hold 20.64% (New Zealand Companies Office, 2017). While the smelter is now approaching 50 years of operation in New Zealand, the agreements that constructed the smelter began in the late 1950s as a means of promoting greater industrial development. It is an irony that a smelter project that began, for the government at least, as a means of encouraging greater industrialisation and economic independence, later became a poster child for foreign control.

As the first oil crisis of the 1970s hit, the cheap power promised to Comalco in 1960 was now far less palatable in the context of increasing energy costs and rising power prices.

“The original Comalco rate was 13 times less than the rate paid by New Zealand householders and one twentieth the rate charged to other industries and farmers. The government even granted the company the right to take electricity from the national grid at Manapouri prices; Comalco exercised this right in 1974, when a drought caused a severe drop in Lake Manapouri’s level.” (Horton, 1992b)

In 1979 The Coalition for Open Government obtained a submission written by a former Comalco employee, Mr K.W. Diamond of Tauranga. Mr Diamond’s comments were discussed in an article in *Open Government Report*, which was later republished in *Watchdog*. Mr Diamond states:

“One simple human error by a Minister (in an energy related agreement) has already proved economically disastrous for NZ. In 1969 the then Minister of Trade and Industry...signed a 99 year Power Pricing Agreement with Comalco Ltd. The Minister, by omitting to ensure that a suitable inflation escalation clause was included, subsequently enabled Comalco to purchase 10% of NZ’s total electricity requirement at a virtually static price for 99 years.” (‘Comalco “mistake” Costs Millions’, 1979)

If this is true⁴⁰, this would have provided a strong motivation for the New Zealand government to seek renegotiation of the agreement, the efforts for which I will discuss in the next section.

⁴⁰ In September 1976 CAFGINZ challenged the impression given by Comalco that its charges increased at the same level of inflation, highlighting that only around one-twentieth of Comalco’s charges were subject to inflation(‘Report on Comalco Demo’, 1976).

49. The 1977 negotiations: Muldoon vs Comalco

In the leadup to the 1975 election, both the Labour Government and the National opposition recognised public concern over the smelter power agreement and promised to review it.

(‘Comalco Renegotiations’, 1977; Lind, 1996, p. 129).

During negotiations government officials sought a 650 % increase in the price the smelter paid for power, whereas Comalco only offered a 150% increase, with no increases for inflation or rising oil costs and a guarantee of their power requirements at all times (Lusk & Currie, 1982, p. 28). Formal negotiations began in October 1976 and reached a stalemate in June 1977. Muldoon accused the company of stalling, as the delay meant the company had avoided paying \$10,000 in higher charges (Lusk & Currie, 1982, p. 28). Following an unsuccessful meeting between Prime Minister Robert Muldoon, Comalco Chairman Sir Donald Hibberd and representatives of Comalco’s Japanese shareholders, Sumitomo and Showa Denko, Muldoon told reporters the government would consider imposing a higher electricity price by legislation (‘Analysis: Document Number 3’, 1980; Lind, 1996, p. 130). Hibberd described the threat as “unfortunate by a Government of a country that recognised the rule of law.” (Lind, 1996, pp. 131–132; NZPA, 1977a). Comalco threatened to close the smelter if it was forced to pay the government price (NZPA, 1977c, 1977f).

Commentary on the issue in the media was more sympathetic to Comalco. The *Christchurch Star* was the only daily paper to support the Government (Lusk & Currie, 1982, p. 30). The New Zealand Chambers of Commerce, the Invercargill City Council and the Southland Progress League were critical of the government, as was the former Labour MP for Awarua in Southland, Aubrey Begg (NZPA, 1977b). He was joined by Labour leader Bill Rowling, who criticised Muldoon for threatening to legislate the power price in 1977 warning it “would jeopardise any further investment or economic relationships with overseas interests.” (Lusk & Currie, 1982, p. 30).

While Roger Wilson (1982, p. 72) attributes a key role to CAFGINZ in fuelling public disquiet at the “favours received by the smelter” from the mid-1970s, this is in the context of a book celebrating environmental and peace activism. In contrast, the press reports from the time indicate that CAFGINZ were not a significant participant in the public debate over the negotiations with Comalco in 1977. Voices critical of Comalco included Ewen McCann, a lecturer in economics at Canterbury University, energy commentator Molly Melhuish, and environmental and conservation organisations (McCann, 1977; NZPA, 1977b). The former leader

of Save Manapouri, Ron McClean, described the Comalco agreement as the “most inept” ever entered into by a New Zealand Government, and one which should never be repeated (McCann, 1977; NZPA, 1977e). The most significant contribution made by CAFCINZ to public debate during the 1977 negotiations was the publication of a booklet on the history of Comalco. “The Amazing Adventures of N.Z. No. 1 Power Junky: The True Story of Comalco” (Lusk & Currie, 1982) told the story of Comalco in New Zealand in comic book form. The Christchurch Press ran a story on “Power Junky” on 18 November 1977 (‘Booklet to Tell Comalco History’, 1977).



With well researched text by Peter Lusk and lively, eye catching artwork from Ron Currie the ‘Comalco comic’ remained in high demand for several years, regularly selling out at the Christchurch Resistance Bookshop. A CAFCA activist remembers: “Our Comalco comic seems to me one of the best things we ever did....because it really did get that message out. I loved the way that happened, it made it simple. That’s what I believe in, getting stuff out in a really easy digestible manner” (T. Currie, personal communication, 4 May 2015). In 1981, CAFCINZ

reported that the Comalco Comic remained “amazingly popular” more than four years after its publication, noting they had recent bulk orders from Invercargill and Brisbane that CAFGINZ had been unable to meet (‘AGM Report’, 1981). CAFGINZ published an updated version of “Power Junky” in December 1982.

On 4 November 1977 Comalco walked out on talks with the government (NZPA, 1977d). A settlement was reached on December 13 where Comalco agreed to an increase of 450 per cent on current rates immediately, with regular increases to follow (Horton, 1980b). Yet there was quite a story to be told as to what had occurred between November and December.

50. Revelations made by CAFGINZ on the 1977 negotiations

In May 1980 CAFGINZ released photocopies of internal Comalco documents that portrayed the 1977 negotiations in a different light. On the basis of the documents, it was alleged that:

1. On 5 May 1976 Comalco representatives met with the Minister of Labour J. B Gordon to discuss the impact of power shutdowns on the smelter. Gordon asked Comalco to write a paper to be presented to the Cabinet. According to a letter from Comalco’s New Zealand office to its headquarters in Melbourne, the paper was written and delivered to the Private Secretary of Energy Resources to be retyped onto official cabinet paper stationary. The Secretary told Comalco the paper was not to be referred to the New Zealand Electricity Department or any other department for comment (M. B. Bennett, personal communication, 6 May 1976). It is not clear whether members of the cabinet were aware the paper was authored by Comalco.
2. Following Muldoon’s threat to legislate, Comalco New Zealand sought to bring diplomatic pressure to bear on the New Zealand Government from the governments of the United States, Australia, Japan and Britain, the host governments of Comalco’s direct or indirect shareholders. On 2 November 1977, Comalco sent telexes to K. Shimizu, the head of Comalco (Japan), suggesting industry and government action against New Zealand. A similar request went to Lord Shackleton, deputy chairman of Rio Tinto Corporation of Britain and Kaiser Aluminium and Chemical Corporation of the United States. Comalco also sent a letter to Australian Prime Minister Malcolm Fraser.
3. The United States Government provided Comalco with details of a confidential discussion between Muldoon and the United States Secretary of Energy, Mr Schlesinger, concerning the power price negotiations with Comalco (‘Analysis: Document 2A and 2B’, 1980; D. R. Bunny, personal communication, 16 November 1977). Comalco utilised

this information in its battle with the New Zealand government to keep the power price down. Prior to meeting with Muldoon, Schlesinger was briefed by Cornell Maier, a Comalco director and President of Kaiser Aluminium and Chemical Corporation, which has 50 per cent control of Comalco ('Analysis: Document 2A and 2B', 1980).

4. According to a telex from Comalco Public Relations Manager, D. R. Bunney, to Comalco Japan, an unnamed senior Japanese government official was shown a letter addressed to the New Zealand government concerning the negotiations. CAFKINZ deduced this is most likely to be a letter from the Australian Government to the New Zealand Government, perhaps written in response to Comalco's letter to Fraser (Horton, 1980b). The telex states: "Chairman approves showing, repeat showing, copy of contents of letter to senior Government official but under no circumstances leaving copy as leakage could seriously harm protocol both here and Wellington" ('More Comalco Documents Issued', 1980). CAFKINZ believe Comalco and NZAS Chairman Donald Hibberd approved this action as a means of encouraging Japanese pressure on New Zealand during the power price negotiations.
5. While Comalco claimed it wished to keep the power price secret to prevent its commercial competitors gaining an advantage, a 1976 letter from Comalco Chairman Donald Hibbert to N. Hasegawa the President of Comalco Japan suggests more political motivations for secrecy. Following the release of the Bluff power price to Japanese media to back up complaints about power prices in Japan, Hibbert complained to his Japanese counterpart that "public comparison of NZAS price with those substantially higher could react to the disadvantage of NZAS". He noted the push from New Zealand government officials to force an upward renegotiation of the power price. "In addition, some sections, of the public and the press have been quite vociferous in their demands for a higher power price at Bluff, and are exerting pressure on the Government in this regard. I am sure you would agree that statements comparing the NZAS power price with other prices, which our opponents may quote out of context to support their case, should be avoided if possible. Also we have always emphasised to the Government and the press that the NZAS power price is confidential" ('More Comalco Documents Issued', 1980). CAFKINZ claims that the letter shows Comalco were seeking to deceive the New Zealand public.
6. Another document confirmed Comalco keeps files on its opponents, including CAFKINZ ('Document Number 6', 1980).

51. CAFCA's claims are supported by diplomatic cables

While at the time of the release of the documents CAFKINZ were unsure as to what kind of actions Comalco was calling for, and indeed whether any of these were carried out, it can now be established from diplomatic cables that low-level diplomatic action did occur. This could be described as an attempt to 'place a quiet word in the right ear' variety, but were unlikely to have left the recipient in any doubt as to the direction of sympathy.

At the same time negotiations were restarted in New Zealand, officials of the Washington office of Kaiser Aluminium met with US State Department officials on November 17 to discuss the Comalco dispute in New Zealand (United States Department of State, 1977a). State Department officials told Kaiser that the United States Government (USG) would "view a unilateral abrogation of the contract by GNZ [Government of New Zealand] as very unwise and that such a move could potentially strain GNZ-USG relations, as well as dampen foreign investment interest." (United States Department of State, 1977a). As Kaiser representatives indicated that the Government of Australia (GOA) and the Government of Japan had spoken to the New Zealand government on NZAS behalf, the State Department sent a telex to relevant US embassies in Wellington, Tokyo and Canberra enquiring as to whether "demarches" had been made on the issue. This act in itself which would have sent a signal to the relevant US embassies at a time the negotiations were still in progress.

In response to the telex from the State Department, the US Embassy in Canberra stated:

"GOA...has made no formal demarche to GNZ...concerning power rate dispute between GNZ and smelter joint venturers [SIC]. However, a low-keyed information representation was made to GNZ Associate Finance Minister [Hugh] Templeton through GOA Embassy in Wellington. GOA informed GNZ that, although not wanting to get directly involved in power rate dispute, GOA was vitally interested in seeing amiable settlement between interested parties. GOA said that any action that resulted in closure of smelter, as has been threatened by Comalco, could have serious foreign policy ramifications." (US Embassy Canberra, 1977).

GOA also highlighted that 40 million Australian dollars worth of Australian alumina were exported to the smelter each year. When the Japanese Government asked the GOA for their views, the GOA gave the same response they gave the Department of State (USDOS).

In their response to the State Department, the US Embassy in London indicated that the "UK High Commissioner in Wellington was to make an informal presentation to the New Zealand Minister of Finance on November 29 expressing surprise the matter had escalated to current

state, and hoping that solution would soon be reached by the two sides. British do believe that matter will be solved but are unhappy that it has become so public, and expect that will delay settlement.” (US Embassy London, 1977). As Muldoon was still in the United States or in transit on November 29, on his way home via Hawaii, this suggests acting Finance Minister Hugh Templeton would have received the presentation.

The Japanese Foreign Office told the US Embassy in Japan they had been aware of the NZAS rates issue since “last August” but the Japanese government had “so far taken no official steps with regard to the problem” believing the matter was still under negotiation between the private companies involved. The Japanese official said that to his knowledge neither of the Japanese companies involved (Sumitomo Chemicals and Showa Denko) had contacted their government about the matter (US Embassy Toyko, 1977).

On hearing Muldoon was about to visit the United States Kaiser officials sought a meeting with the New Zealand Prime Minister. On 23 November Muldoon met the President of Kaiser Aluminium, Cornell Maier, in Los Angeles. Kaiser indicated to Muldoon a settlement that included price level sought by the New Zealand Government was possible, if reached in steps and the provision for escalation of the power price paralleled economic activity in the aluminium industry.

“In addition, Kaiser gave the PM a possible basis for negotiations: The power rate for any year would be the higher of a negotiated minimum rate for that year or an escalated rate. The minimum rate would commence in 1978 and escalate in annual steps as negotiated between the Government and Comalco. The escalated rate would use the 1978 minimum rate as the base rate and would escalate in accordance with a modified version of the U.S. or Alcan metal price.....”

The PM reportedly stated he was attracted to the Kaiser approach in that it would fulfil his political promises to renegotiate the Manapouri power agreement. Muldoon also indicated he thought unilateral action by GNZ would be undesirable and to be used only as a last resort. The PM apparently stated he would like matter resolved by the time Parliament adjourned.” (United States Department of State, 1977b)

On 12 December Kaiser officials met with the USDOS again to raise concern that legislation was being readied by the New Zealand Government to set power rates. The USDOS agreed that the time had come for the US Government to take action in the dispute. It requested that the US Embassy in Wellington;

“should inquire of GNZ the status of the negotiations, stressing that the USG, like the GOA, does not wish to inject itself into the negotiations, but that we

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believe a unilateral abrogation of the smelter power contract would be highly undesirable and could have an unsettling effect on economic relations. Embassy should also mention the publicity that would follow introduction and debate of the power rate legislation concerns us since such publicity could possibly frustrate objective negotiating, and raise matter to political arena from technical level. Embassy should use its discretion as to level of approach for these oral representations. b) We would also greatly appreciate knowing content and intended use of the two bills reportedly being prepared for parliamentary consideration.” (United States Department of State, 1977c)

The diplomatic cables provide strong evidence that CAFGINZ were right and that the New Zealand government was “leaned on” in the course of the negotiations with Comalco. By releasing the internal Comalco documents CAFGINZ uncovered a very significant story in the face of stony public denials.

In 1980, the public response of Muldoon to the allegations made by CAFGINZ was typically bullish. "I feel that it is utter nonsense. They (the campaign) are fanatics and there is no sense in what they are saying," Mr Muldoon said. He said there was no reason to go to the United States and discuss the negotiations in detail as they had already been discussed with Comalco in New Zealand ('Secret Comalco Pressure Alleged', 1980).

CAFGINZ responded to Muldoon in the next issue of Watchdog:

“What rubbish! We never said that detailed discussions had taken place. What we did say, based on Comalco documents 2A and 2B, was that Muldoon had discussed the Comalco “problem” with the U.S. Secretary of Energy, James Schlesinger, and that later the U.S. Government handed a transcript to Comalco. Notice that Muldoon evades a simple “yes” or “no” to the main question – whether such talks had actually taken place. He must know whether or not they did. He didn’t deny it, which would be the most devastating reply he could give us. Therefore, the answer is “yes”, the Comalco documents are authentic, the quote they contain from the Muldoon-Schlesinger meeting are accurate, and the U.S. Government did pass on confidential information to Comalco. Thanks for letting us know, Mr Muldoon.” (Horton, 1980b)

The evidence from diplomatic cables indicates that detailed discussions did occur, as the structure of the deal discussed with Kaiser on 29 November matched, at least in as much can be known about, the final settlement reached on December 13. It is possible that Muldoon’s response to CAFGINZ was partly motivated by not wanting to offend Comalco’s local representatives with whom he had been negotiating, as admitting that detailed discussions had taken place would be as good as publically stating he had gone over their heads.

In reference to evidence a Comalco report was delivered to the Private Secretary of the then Minister of Energy Resources, Eric Holland, for retyping on official cabinet paper stationery,

Muldoon suggested it was “defamatory” to suggest one of his ministers set out to deliberately deceive his colleagues. Yet CAFGINZ had made no such claims, such that Murray Horton believed Muldoon was attempting to set up false allegations, to imply subsequently that these came from CAFGINZ so the same allegations could be strenuously dismissed. “Obviously he is quite embarrassed if he has to resort to a trick like that in order to discredit us.” (Horton, 1980b, p. 4).

Muldoon also said it was “nonsense” to say the New Zealand Government had been “leaned on” (‘Secret Comalco Pressure Alleged’, 1980): “We got towards the end of the Parliamentary session and they were hanging on and hanging on. Every month that they delayed was a matter of millions of dollars to the New Zealand taxpayer.” Comalco was told by the Government that it had until the House rose to agree to a price, and was warned that if it had not settled the matter Parliament would legislate to establish a “fair price.” “At that stage they agreed, ” Mr Muldoon said (‘Comalco Papers’ Baffle Company Head’, 1980).

At this point, CAFGINZ accused Muldoon of rewriting history, as the threat to legislate was made on October 30, whereas a deal was not concluded until six weeks later.

“As Muldoon tells the story, he issued a threat and Comalco surrendered. This is not true. Comalco responded immediately by walking out of negotiations, preparing to take legal action (their lawyer was former P.M., Jack Marshall!), and by seeking action against N.Z. by Britain, Japan, Australia and the U.S.”

In his memoirs that looked at the inner workings of the Muldoon Cabinet, Hugh Templeton tells a similar story to Muldoon: “Muldoon had successfully battered into submission a multinational partner and a company which had come to New Zealand at the government’s request.”(Templeton, 1995, p. 77). Templeton also neglects to explain what happened between the threat to legislate on October 30 and the settlement. He also makes no mention of any “low-key” representations from Australian or British diplomats even though the diplomatic cables indicate that Templeton himself was the target of soft “demarches”.

Another possibility, perhaps not considered by CAFGINZ, is that Muldoon made the threat to legislate more than once. According to Templeton, Muldoon had a bill ready, if necessary, for his meeting with Hibberd on 8 December. Muldoon informed his cabinet that agreement was close, and he expected Hibberd to settle.

“That afternoon he issued his ultimatum to Hibberd. Accept the government’s terms or face parliamentary legislation! Hibberd was at first outraged, but in face of that sovereign ace, crumpled and threw in his hand. I found him, after he had left Muldoon’s offices, white and shaken.” (Templeton, 1995, p. 77)

Hibberd's reports on this meeting may have led to Kaiser meeting the USDOS on 12 December to warn of the impending legislation (United States Department of State, 1977c). But what would have motivated Muldoon to threaten to resort to parliamentary legislation on 8 December, given the diplomatic and other backlash he received for floating the possibility a month earlier? Did Muldoon believe Hibberd was refusing to agree to parts of the deal that Muldoon believed had already been agreed in his meeting with Cornel Maier? An NZPA report from Los Angeles, published in *The Press* on 26 November noted: "It is understood that Kaiser wants the problem of power rates negotiated and resolved. The giant American company can be expected to lean on Comalco to reach an understanding with the Government." (NZPA, 1977g)

There is some evidence that Comalco's New Zealand negotiating team felt undermined by the changing instructions from Melbourne and elsewhere. Lead negotiator Ian Borrie recalled: "At one stage, I felt the negotiating plans we had put in place were bearing fruit. Then, in the newspaper next morning, I read that Cornel Meier, Chief Executive of Kaiser Aluminium, had met the Prime Minister when he was in the United States and was reported as conceding a number of Muldoon's arguments. I was astounded. I felt that the rug had been pulled out from under my feet." (Lind, 1996, p. 135). Lind (1996) reports Meryn Bennett's reaction was even stronger. There were other differences of opinion over strategy on the Comalco side. Following Muldoon's threat to legislate, Hibberd, Borrie and Comalco lawyer Jim Armstrong sought to take the New Zealand Government to court, but the Comalco board would not back them (Lind, 1996, p. 130).

The suggestion that Muldoon believed the New Zealand negotiators were continuing to resist points acknowledged or partly acknowledged by Kaiser is speculative, but it does fit some of the evidence.

52. Reactions to CAFGINZ releasing the documents

CAFGINZ described the reaction of the New Zealand news media as "gutless".

"Muldoon made blatant distortions and they didn't pick it up. Bennett clammed up and they didn't persist. In the case of the TV, with Government encouragement, they latched onto the idea that the documents "may have an innocent explanation". In itself the idea is ridiculous, but even if it is accepted, the TV didn't care to notice that "may be innocent: implies the possibility "may not be innocent" as well." (Horton, 1980b)

A week after the release of the documents, *The Press* journalist Garry Arthur (1980) published a profile on CAFGINZ and the background of its key activists. Arthur described how CAFGINZ

used “publicity skills learned in a decade of protesting” to achieve “wide media coverage” on the internal Comalco papers.

Later, CAFKINZ were contacted by *Eyewitness*, a major TV news programme and asked for urgent copies of the documents for a special programme on Comalco’s relationship with the Government (Horton, 1980d). Despite sending the documents to Auckland by private air courier, CAFKINZ heard no more about it. When CAFKINZ asked for reimbursement of the courier costs, *Eyewitness* said the documents would be used as background material for stories on energy multinationals.

It appears parliamentarians were also wary of criticising Comalco. On receiving the Comalco documents Labour MP David Caygill gave CAFKINZ the impression he was keen to use them as the basis for a question in Parliament (Horton, 1980d). Yet after some time he sent CAFKINZ a letter: “...As you might have gathered from my silence, it has become clear that suitable questions cannot be framed within Standing Orders...” (op. cit.). Given that Rowling criticised Muldoon for threatening to legislate in 1977, it is possible Caygill may have been instructed by his leader not ask any questions (Lusk & Currie, 1982, p. 30). CAFKINZ panned Caygill’s inaction “this is one more example of Labour’s appalling track record on Comalco” (Horton, 1980d).

In October 1980 the Auckland University student newspaper *Craccum* ran a number of articles examining the proposal for a second aluminium smelter in New Zealand, illustrated with cartoons from the Comalco Comic. *Craccum* included a history of Comalco and the Bluff Aluminium smelter that acknowledged CAFKINZ as the key source and described Watchdog as an “excellent newsletter” (‘The Comalco Saga’, 1980).

While the release of the Comalco documents boosted CAFCA’s credibility and profile on the Comalco issue, this was in the context of public debate concerning plans for a second aluminium smelter in Otago and plans to expand the smelter at Bluff (Bertram & Ericksen, 1980, p. vi). In August 1980 the Environmental Studies Unit at the University of Waikato invited the main protagonists and interest groups, including those supportive of Comalco, to a seminar on aluminium smelting, yet CAFKINZ were not in attendance. Key protagonists contributing papers to the seminar included Bruce Carrie from the Department of Trade and Industry, Kerry McDonald (NZIER), Professor Paul Moeseke, Geoff Bertram and Murray Ellis.

The release of the Comalco documents also attracted international interest. *Multinational Monitor* made contact with CAFKINZ and asked them to write an article of interest to American

readers, highlighting how Comalco gained information about Muldoon's confidential discussions with Energy Secretary Schlesinger through Kaiser Aluminium lobbyists ('CAFCINZ Published in U.S.', 1981). While this article did not appear in the magazine, due to lack of space, *Multinational Monitor* did publish an article about Comalco by Horton (1992b) a decade later.

In 1980 a group of global activists met in South Dakota, United States and agreed to start a campaign to expose Comalco's parent company, RTZ, as an example of the "singleminded greed" of multinational mining companies and the impact of the operations of such companies on indigenous people around the world (B. Rosenberg, 1981). This led to a coalition being formed with People Against Rio Tinto Zinc and Subsidiaries (PARTiZANS) in London acting as an umbrella group. Members included several British groups concerned about Third World underdevelopment and two Australian Aboriginal Land Councils. CAFCINZ were invited to join the coalition and took part in a week of action against RTZ in May 1981. Their contribution included working on a new version of the Comalco Comic (Lusk & Currie, 1982), leafleting a Christchurch based engineering firm, Andersons, a Comalco subsidiary and organising a seminar on mining.

The global centre of the week of action was a conference and 'tribunal' held in London on the weekend of May 9-10 that critically examined the activities of RTZ. PARTiZANS flew CAFCINZ's Bill Rosenberg to London as one of four overseas speakers, joining Les Russell and Joyce Hall representing Aboriginal groups in Australia and Randy Sweetnam, representing a community of Indians and settlers in Labrador Canada (B. Rosenberg, 1981). All overseas speakers had their fares paid for. The Comalco documents were a key part of the 'testimony' presented by Rosenberg at the 'tribunal'.

Following the trip to London, PARTiZANS remained one of CAFCINZ's most important international contacts. In November 1990 CAFCA hosted PARTiZANS Roger Moody for a speaking tour of New Zealand. Murray Horton also spoke at virtually all meetings, so the tour also raised CAFCA's profile at a national level ('Roger Moody', 1991). Moody and Horton visited Auckland, Whangarei, Whitianga, Coromandel, Colville, Thames, Waihi, Te Aroha, Hamilton, Wellington, Nelson, Christchurch, Dunedin and Manapouri ('Roger Moody', 1991). The meeting in Waihi was particularly memorable. For Moody (1991b) it was the highlight of the trip – a Saturday that became part of local and CAFCA folklore. In an article marking Horton's return to Waihi three years later, a journalist from the *Waihi Leader* described Horton's 1990 speech on Comalco and its power 'deals' as an "an eye-opener and is still talked about today. He held the environmentalists and mining fraternity alike spellbound with his

address.”(‘Foreign Investors Take Cover - Horton Returns’, 1993). The audience of around 150 were also lively – one irate local thrust his gold wedding ring into the face of the opposition and demanded "Would you leave town if we all gave you these?" (Moody, 1991b). Prior to the start of the meeting in 1990 a local activist advised Moody “that one of the miners due to appear that night has faxed RTZ in Melbourne for the low-down on Roger Moody: he received material which "was personal" and which he didn't know whether or not to use” (Moody, 1991b). The Waihi Leader journalist also noted Comalco had someone in the audience taking notes about what Horton was saying about the company (‘Foreign Investors Take Cover - Horton Returns’, 1993).

CAFCA described the tour by Roger Moody as “extremely successful” (‘Roger Moody’, 1991). Following Moody’s visit CAFCA pledged \$1000 towards Moody’s proposed book examining the activities of RTZ around the world and agreed to act as co-publisher with PARTiZANS. The book was published in late 1991 as ‘Plunder!’ In the acknowledgements of the book Moody attributes “virtually all of the revelations of the Comalco price rip-off in New Zealand were made by CAFCA” (Moody, 1991a). The book was launched in New Zealand by Senior Lecturer in Economics at Victoria University, Geoff Bertram (1991b), who also introduced his own work examining the tax paid by the smelter in its years of operation. Bertram also reviewed the book for the Public Service Association (PSA) Journal (Bertram, 1991a). He commented on the value of the book:

“Books of this kind are invaluable in maintaining and advancing public understanding of modern capitalism for two main reasons: they provide a counterweight to the huge mass of corporate propaganda with which public and politicians are continually bombarded, and they keep alive a research agenda which might otherwise become buried, involving timeless issues of power, control, corporate behaviour, individual and community rights, and the role of the state.” (Bertram, 1991a, 1991b, p. 11)

‘Plunder!’ has been reasonably well-cited internationally, with 34 citations in Google Scholar as of September 2020. James Goodman (2004, p. 115) describes ‘Plunder!’ as “widely recognised as a key text for campaigners on mining issues”. In 1996 the Australian-based mineworkers’ union, the Construction, Forestry, Mining and Energy Union (CFMEU), in association with the Brussels-based International Federation of Chemical, Energy, Mine and General Workers Unions (ICEM), launched an international campaign targeting Rio Tinto.

“From its inception, the campaign coalition reached beyond trade unions to draw in environmental campaigns, indigenous peoples’ organisations and human rights groups, in a concerted effort to target and highlight the abuses of

Rio Tinto. It could, then, be seen as offering a model for cross-national social movement unionism."(Goodman, 2004)

As the unions were intending to produce a report on Rio Tinto at the same time PARTiZANS were looking to update their 1991 work this became another avenue for collaboration. The focus of *Plunder!* on human and environmental rights and its detailed sections on specific mines were incorporated into the resulting ICEM report and influenced the form the report finally took (op. cit). The report, '*Rio Tinto: The Tainted Titan*', was presented to shareholders in 1998 and was structured to resemble the company's annual report on glossy A4 paper. While no New Zealand unions attended a conference held in South Africa in February 1998 concerning the ICEM campaign, CAFCA were invited to send a solidarity message and were happy to do so ('Comalco', 1998). CAFCA also wrote about the campaign in *Watchdog* ('Comalco', 1998) and reviewed *The Tainted Titan* (Griffiths, 1998), perhaps not aware of how CAFCA had indirectly influenced the campaign through its support for the publication of *Plunder!*.

CAFCINZ also gained generous coverage in Roger Wilson's (1982) book examining the growth of the environmental movement in New Zealand. Wilson highlighted CAFCA's role in questioning the foreign exploitation of mineral resources represented by the proposed Mt Davy mine, as well as the history of Comalco in New Zealand and the release by CAFCINZ of the internal Comalco papers. Wilson included *Foreign Control Watchdog* and *Power Junky* on his lists for "further reading".

53. The Deane memo

The next round of negotiations between the government and Comalco began in 1986 at the same time as the Labour government were undertaking widespread market-oriented 'reform' of the electricity sector. The generation and transmission activities owned by the government were to be corporatised and transferred to a new state owned enterprise (SOE), the Electricity Corporation of New Zealand (also known as ECNZ or Electricorp). As an SOE the overriding aim would be to operate as a commercial business, a structure that was intended to remove cross-subsidies and insulate management from political control (Kelsey, 1995, p. 118). A government Minister, David Caygill later acknowledged that "a factor in the Labour Government setting up ECNZ was in order to see the negotiations with Comalco sorted out properly, and as quickly as could be." (Wallington, 1993)

In March 1987 Comalco sought an injunction to prevent the government from transferring the Manapouri power station to Electricorp. This had a bearing on the negotiations because if

Manapouri was transferred at a high price, this would suggest Comalco should be paying more for its electricity ('Comalco: Wants Its Lake', 1987). Justice Greig refused the application, and said while Comalco had an arguable case it was not a strong one (Lind, 1996, p. 173).

During the negotiations it was mooted that Comalco could buy the Manapouri power station, an irony given that Comalco had originally promised to build the station itself (see chapter 4). In February 1987 Comalco offered \$300-500 million for the power station, which did not derive much enthusiasm from the Minister of Energy, Bob Tizard, who seemed somewhat insulted at the price offered (B. Ansley, 1989b). In April the Chief Executive of Electricorp, Dr Roderick Deane, took an alternative proposal to ministers in which Electricorp would form a joint venture company to buy the smelter. Electricorp would initially hold 75 per cent of the Manapouri Power Company(MPC), with Comalco holding 19.5% and Sumitomo 5.1%. Deane also suggested this could assist the privatisation of Electricorp in a public float. In the event of such a float Comalco would retain an option to take up to 50% of the MPC (O'Sullivan, 1989).

In 1989 and 1990 CAFCA anonymously received a number of government documents that concerned both the negotiations over the power price and the possible sale of Manapouri to Comalco. The first was a 1989 document that appeared to originate from the Ministry of Energy titled "Sale of Manapouri Power Scheme"('Comalco: More Information More Manipulation', 1989). The document estimated that in 1988/89 Comalco paid 2.5 cents per kWh (kilowatt hour) for power compared with the Bulk Supply Tariff (BST) of 5.81 cents per kWh. The BST is the average price Electricorp charges power boards, who then sell it to consumers with a markup of 8 to 9 cents to cover the costs of supplying and maintaining power lines and other costs. The document provided a number of estimates of the "value" of Manapouri power, in the range of 3.38 to 4.5 cents per kWh, assessing factors such as the amortisation of revalued historic costs of the power scheme, and the cost of supply if a new scheme had to be built. These estimates ranged from 3.38 to 4.5 cents per kWh, demonstrating that Comalco were paying substantially less than any other potential customer for Manapouri power. They were also paying substantially less than any other bulk user for electricity. CAFCA checked the document for authenticity by comparing the figures in the document with other sources.

In 1990 CAFCA released another document – a memorandum from Deane highlighting how taxpayers were subsidising Comalco.

"Because the smelter has paid considerably less than a BST determined price, it has been subsidised by the taxpayer to a far greater extent than all other electricity consumers. With corporatisation, electricity consumers will now

have to meet the full cost of running the electricity system. Under the existing agreements, without any explicit Government subsidy, all other electricity consumers will be subsidising the smelter...Compared with the Crown's negotiating position (and all other electricity consumers), Comalco is benefitting by \$1-1.5 million per week as a result of the present agreements." (Deane, 1987)

CAFCA gained coverage for Deane's comments during the winter of 1992 when low hydro lake levels led to a serious electricity shortage. While Comalco reluctantly agreed to a partial shutdown to save power (Smellie, 1992), with up to \$10 million offered by Electricorp as compensation, Murray Horton said New Zealanders had no reason to thank Comalco as taxpayers had been subsidising Comalco since 1971 ('Kiwis Don't Need', 1992). He noted that the country would have plenty of power if the smelter was closed or mothballed. The release of the Deane memo would later gain greater significance when it became the subject of a legal dispute between Comalco and TVNZ.

In March 1991, CAFCA obtained a document that suggested the sale of Manapouri was again being considered by the new National government that had taken office the previous November. Following coverage of CAFCA's discovery in the *Christchurch Star* (C. Hutching, 1991), the government confirmed the next day that a revived sale proposal was being considered by a cabinet sub-committee (NZPA, 1991a). A few days later, the energy spokesperson for the Environment and Conservation Organisations of New Zealand, Molly Melhuish, described the proposal as "commercial and environmental madness" that would not only drown environmental concerns, but would mean Comalco would face no price hikes in its power bill at the same time dramatic price rises for natural gas and electricity were expected (NZPA, 1991b). The sale proposal led to the revival of the Save Manapouri Campaign in 1991, with many of the same leaders in place and helping to fund a \$53,000 campaign budget. Now called 'Power For Our Future', the campaign opposed the sale of Manapouri as they wished to ensure Comalco did not rehabilitate its plans to raise the lake and called for the government to keep the power station in public (or semi-public) ownership (Horton, 1992b). Later in 1991, Prime Minister Jim Bolger announced Manapouri would not be sold to Comalco, to the disappointment of the company.

54. The Tizard memo and another Official Information Act battle

In Chapter 5 I outlined CAFCA's five year battle to obtain meaningful information from the OIC using the Official Information Act. CAFCA adopted similar methods in their battle with Comalco. In April 1992 Comalco Managing Director Kerry McDonald, responded to an

editorial critical of Comalco in the *Christchurch Mail*, a small community newspaper.

McDonald claimed:

“A detailed review of Comalco's electricity pricing arrangements with government officials in 1986-87 concluded that the Crown received a higher rate of profit per unit of electricity supplied to Comalco than it did from the supplying of electricity to the average consumer.” (McDonald, 1992)

This attracted the attention of CAFCA who sought to use the Official Information Act (OIA) to substantiate the claim.

“...we latched onto this like pigidogs gripping a particularly uncooperative tusker. Reference to this 1986-87 government review had already been made in a letter to the "Press" by a Comalco flak earlier in 92, and we had pursued that. After some fancy footwork with various departments and ministries, we had ended up in the lair of the Treasury, the high priesthood of Rogernomics. Armed with McDonald's reference to this 1986-87 official review, we settled in for a long siege (‘The Great Comalco Rip Off’, 1993).

In response to the OIA request lodged by CAFCA, Treasury claimed they didn't know their own way around their own filing system and would take 16 hours at \$50 an hour to look for this material. In demanding \$500 to \$750 upfront, CAFCA believed Treasury were attempting to price the material out of their reach. The Chief Ombudsman, John Robertson, ruled in favour of Treasury's charges.

Yet CAFCA had another ace in their sleeve. An anonymous source told CAFCA the name of the document they needed – Memorandum for Cabinet: “Comalco Negotiations and Corporatisation”, dated on or about May 10 1987, signed by Cabinet Ministers Bob Tizard and David Caygill. Treasury responded to this now very specific request with a simple refusal, without any further requests for payment. This strengthened CAFCA's belief that the issue was never about money in the first place and that Treasury were attempting to protect Comalco. Following intervention from the Ombudsman, nearly a year later, in January 1993 CAFCA received the Cabinet memo and a detailed briefing paper from the Officials Smelter Committee and Crown Negotiating Group dated April 29, 1987. I will refer to these documents as the “Tizard” memo. The documents were heavily redacted, with whole pages deleted, and any references to sums of money or percentages of other user's rates paid by Comalco blacked out. The released pages were also branded with an intrusive “Released under the Official Information Act”. While Treasury had released the documents, they were released in a form that made them near incomprehensible.

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“But CAFCA had yet another ace. By comparing the documents received under the OIA with the documents leaked to CAFCA in 1990, CAFCA were able to work out what Treasury had deleted (‘The Great Comalco Rip Off’*, 1993). This included the average percentage of the South Island BST paid by Comalco (55%). While Treasury attempted to withhold this in 1993, CAFCA were amused to find this figure had been already been released by Tizard as Minister of Energy in a 1987 press statement. CAFCA pointed this out to the Ombudsman and highlighted the public interest in Comalco and power pricing. Treasury then agreed to release the documents uncut, apart from the direct electricity costs of Comalco, a figure which, in any case, CAFCA had been able to calculate for a number of years (*ibid*). CAFCA then wrote back to Treasury and asked for any evidence in support of McDonald’s 1992 claim in the *Christchurch Mail*. C. J. Gould replied on behalf of the Secretary of the Treasury. “We have found no conclusion in official papers that the Crown received a higher rate of profit per unit of electricity supplied to Comalco than it did from supplying electricity to the average consumer” (*‘Comalco Accused’*, 1993)*

CAFCA took the issue to the media in March 1993. Murray Horton said "Kerry McDonald's 1992 claim has been refuted by Treasury and shown to be groundless. Treasury has helped prove our point that New Zealanders have no reason to believe or trust anything that Comalco says" (*‘Comalco Accused’*, 1993). In response, McDonald stood by his 1992 article and claimed what Treasury held was not relevant as they had not been directly involved in the review process, saying “I don’t know what they have searched” (*‘Comalco Accused’*, 1993) . Yet as CAFCA pointed out in *Watchdog*, McDonald ignored the fact that the documents supplied by Treasury were Electricorp briefing papers and cabinet memos (*‘The Great Comalco Rip Off’*, 1993). In August 1993 McDonald (1993) responded to an article by Fran O’Sullivan (1993) in the *NBR* about a new power supply agreement between Comalco and the Government. McDonald claimed it was “inaccurate and misleading to state that Comalco's electricity prices are subsidised”. He also repeated the claim made in the *Christchurch Mail*, this time emphasising Comalco provided “more profit per unit of electricity purchased than was obtained on sales to the average consumer, by a substantial margin.” The editor of the *NBR* commented on McDonald’s letter:

“Kerry McDonald resorts to semantics on the question of Comalco's power pricing. The subsidy is implicit in the substantial discounts the company receives for electricity. Indeed why now agree to move to "market prices" if Comalco has been providing more profit than other consumers? It defies logic.” (McDonald, 1993)

Like the long protracted battle to obtain information from the OIC, the battle to obtain government documents relating to McDonald's claims in the *Christchurch Mail* demonstrated clear weaknesses in the Official Information Act. As Horton noted:

“What, does this whole exercise tell us about the Official Information Act? Namely, that it is very time consuming (well beyond the patience of all but very dedicated journalists); that it is costly, and those costs are deliberately used to preserve secrecy; and that it is a Catch 22 law. If you don't know what to look for the bureaucracy leaves you to flounder. But how do you know what to look for without securing some of the material? In this case, if we had not had the benefit of a leak from the same batch of documents, and then a tipoff on what to look for (from the same source) we would still be none the wiser. Treasury did indeed release the requested documents - and cut them so heavily as to make them unintelligible....The Act is not working, and it's getting harder to find out what's going on in our name and at our expense.” (‘The Great Comalco Rip Off’, 1993)

Yet CAFCA were only able to demonstrate these weaknesses through a mixture of obtaining documents from other sources, and applying CAFCA's tenacity and analytical ability to piece the information together.

The battles between CAFCA and Comalco were summarised by the investigative journalist Bruce Ansley (1989b, 1993) in major features published in *The Listener*. In response, Kerry McDonald lodged a protest with the magazine editor complaining of “unhealthy collusion between Bruce Ansley and CAFCA” (‘The Great Comalco Rip Off’, 1993, pp. 21–22). To demonstrate Comalco's international clout, Ansley noted the significance of the Comalco documents released by CAFCA in 1980 in which the company marshalled support from the governments of the US, UK and Japan to support its position in the 1977 contract negotiations. He also made use of the government documents obtained by CAFCA in the early 1990s and the efforts by CAFCA to locate evidence to substantiate McDonald's claims in the *Christchurch Mail*. Ansley (1993) also related his own battles to obtain official information concerning the potential sale of Manapouri, through a change of government and more than one appeal to the Ombudsman. The *Christchurch Press* also had its requests under the OIA refused on the grounds of commercial sensitivity and protection of official advice to Ministers and officials (Smellie, 1990).

It is clear that if the Act had not existed and the disclosure of information was left to Comalco, the company would reveal as little information as possible. In response to new government electricity information regulations that would reveal the price of all electricity and gas contracts changed in a “material way” after August 1 1990, Comalco made it clear it did not want the price

it paid for power published. Comalco Managing Director Kerry McDonald said “I would prefer there was no disclosure requirement.” (NZPA, 1990).

In helping to lift the heavy veil of secrecy around Comalco CAFCA made an important contribution to public debate, and in so doing also highlighted the limits of open government in the era of the Official Information Act. Even the Minister who helped create ECNZ, David Caygill, believes there should be less secrecy concerning Comalco.

“I think we are entitled to feel very uncomfortable that such a large consumer has arrangements to which the rest of New Zealand are not privy...what is really wrong about these arrangements is that nobody can sit down and assess them. Outside economists shouldn't be speculating, people who have an interest in the energy industry shouldn't be guessing. We are entitled to know what the facts are.” (Wellington, 1993)

One wonders if seeing the documents from 1980 influenced his thinking.

55. Coverage on Television

In 1989 reporters from TVNZ's current affairs programme 'Frontline' also made use of CAFCA's files on Comalco ('Comalco: More Information More Manipulation', 1989). The prominence of this story is suggested by the fact Comalco attempted to sue TVNZ for damages, an action that was later dropped ('Electricorp Document Confirms Subsidy to Comalco', 1990).

CAFCA's expertise with Comalco led it to make an indirect contribution to public debate in Australia concerning the power price paid by Comalco at its aluminium smelter in Bell Bay. The company were engaged in high profile negotiations with the Tasmanian state government, claiming the redevelopment of the smelter was “absolutely dependent” on buying part of the grid, and was regularly threatening to close the smelter unless Comalco got their way, almost an exact rerun of the negotiating tactics used by the company in New Zealand. CAFCA shared its New Zealand material with the Tasmanian Wilderness Society who issued a press release highlighting the similarities. This became a significant media story in Tasmania and led to an investigation by a Parliamentary Public Accounts Committee. Tasmanian Energy Minister Robin Gray warned that the government would not be blackmailed by the company (Prismall, 1993). While *The Examiner* newspaper (“Trickery” Alleged in Cost Talks', 1993) gave the plaudits to the Wilderness Society for their use of the New Zealand freedom of information laws, it was actually CAFCA who filed the request. Not that CAFCA were likely to mind, given the Wilderness Society earlier shared valuable information on Comalco through its research officer,

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Bob Burton, who CAFCA described as a “longstanding member “ and “invaluable Hobart contact” (‘Comalco’s Bastardy Knows No Bounds’, 1992).

The relevance of Comalco’s activities in Tasmania was also highlighted in September 1993 in an another *Frontline* programme - a wide ranging piece examining the secrecy around Comalco’s electricity contract with Electricorp in New Zealand (Wellington, 1993). Among those interviewed included David Caygill MP (former SOE Minister); Wyatt Creech MP (SOE Minister); Nick Stump (Comalco Chief Executive); Kerry McDonald (Comalco Managing Director); Geoff Bertram (economist); Len Fulton (George Town Warden); Keith Turner (ECNZ negotiator); Christine Milne (Tasmania Greens Leader); and Bob Burton (Wilderness Society)

While CAFCA received no attribution nor were included in the televised interviews for the programme, *Frontline* made extensive use of CAFCA’s files on Comalco (‘Comalco’, 1997). In particular, there was “considerable reliance” on the Deane memo released by CAFCA in 1990, that stated the smelter had been subsidised to a far greater extent than all other electricity consumers (BSA, 1994). When asked to respond, Comalco claimed the memorandum had been thoroughly discredited by ECNZ and that Deane himself later dismissed the numbers included in the report (Wellington, 1993). When TVNZ asked Deane for comment, he was unavailable. While Comalco claimed Deane attempted to contact TVNZ subsequently, this is disputed by TVNZ (BSA, 1994). While CAFCA was pleased the programme “got up the company’s nose (it got up ours too for its extensive but unattributed use of our material)” (‘Comalco’, 1997). This was the closest *Frontline* came to acknowledging CAFCA’s role:

“The Tiwai Point smelter is where it is because it gets cheap power. Just how cheap we know not because the Comalco or the government has told us but because there has been a steady leak of documents relating to the various power deals Comalco has struck with successive New Zealand governments.”
(Wellington, 1993)

The Deane memorandum came a key point of contention when Comalco laid a complaint with the Broadcasting Standards Authority (BSA) over the programme, which the company claimed was overly selective and lacked balance and objectivity. While the BSA criticised *Frontline* for not including comment from ECNZ about the memorandum and not commenting on Comalco’s contribution to the New Zealand economy, overall the BSA considered it “a responsible programme” and “believed that the general impression about Comalco was neither unfair nor unbalanced” (BSA, 1994). While Comalco did not succeed in its efforts to overturn the BSA decision in the High Court (*Comalco New Zealand v Television New Zealand Ltd*, 1996) and the Court of Appeal, it did succeed in forcing TVNZ to release background material compiled in the

preparation of the programme. The significant resources devoted by Comalco in their attempt to counter the questions raised by CAFCA's release of confidential government documents is an indication that the company believed that the release of information was damaging. Attempting to identify the source of these confidential documents, or at least 'plug the leak', may have been part of the motivation for the legal action.

56. CAFCA's contribution to debate on Comalco

The success of the Save Manapouri Campaign created an environment of scepticism around the operations of the Comalco smelter in New Zealand that CAFCAINZ/CAFCA tapped into and extended in their own campaigns. It is likely that CAFCA have published more critical comment on Comalco than any other organisation in New Zealand.

Yet despite the protests and the criticisms the smelter has continued to produce aluminium. While CAFCA has not succeeded in its aim to close the smelter, it has made a significant contribution to the public record about the project. As CAFCA have now been around for almost as long as the smelter has been operating, perhaps the most significant contribution is acting as a journal of record, both in terms of the actions of the company in New Zealand, but also providing detailed record of the company's relationship with the New Zealand Government.

CAFCA's first significant contribution in this area came with the publication of "Power Junky", otherwise known as the 'Comalco Comic' in 1977, as difficult negotiations between the New Zealand Government and Comalco were drawing towards a close. As a small Christchurch organisation, CAFCA sometimes had difficulty keeping up with demand for the Comalco Comic. The release of the Comalco documents in 1980 boosted CAFCA's credibility and profile on the Comalco issue in New Zealand and built lasting international links with other organisations campaigning against Rio Tinto internationally.

While CAFCA expressed some disappointment at the response from the media and others to the release of the Comalco documents in 1980, some of the allegations made by CAFCA can now be corroborated by diplomatic communications not available at the time. Muldoon may have denied the New Zealand Government were 'learned on' in the course of the negotiations and denied that 'detailed discussions' concerning Comalco occurred in his meeting with a Comalco's substantial American shareholder, however the diplomatic evidence suggests low level "demarches" did indeed occur. In releasing the documents in 1980 CAFCA uncovered a significant story and provided an example of the methods large multinational companies use to

sway and influence the actions of governments. The story built CAFCINZ reputation as a significant critical voice on Comalco, that the group were able to build on when Comalco came under the lens of the media.

CAFCA have also made contributions to international debate about the activities of Rio Tinto. The publication of 'Plunder' by Roger Moody, which CAFCA acted as co-publisher and provided some financial backing is most likely CAFCA's most significant contribution to the international public sphere. CAFCA also gained opportunities to tell the story of Comalco in New Zealand at activist conferences overseas and in international magazines. CAFCA also made a contribution to public debate in Australia, by providing information to the Tasmanian Wilderness Society which demonstrated similarities between the tactics adopted by Comalco in negotiations with governmental authorities in Australia and those in New Zealand.

Through the years CAFCA built on this work by releasing and analysing further information and analysis concerning the smelter project, and publicising this through its magazine *Foreign Control Watchdog*, commentary in the news media and through hosting public meetings. The research and analysis carried out by CAFCA has also contributed to civil society understanding of the amount of power used by Comalco and the price paid in comparison with other consumers (B. Ansley, 1993; 'Comalco's Power Supply for 1976-77 Latest Figures', 1977); the proposal to sell the Manapouri power station to Comalco; the potential for transfer pricing; and the ownership structure of the smelter.

The efforts of CAFCA to portray Comalco as the 'poster boy' of the negative effects of transnational capital in New Zealand may have had some success, at least in that it drew a response from the company in question. Following the release of internal Comalco documents to the news media in 1980, Comalco's New Zealand Manager Mervyn B. Bennett said: "I am fed up with Comalco's being epitomised as the be all and end all of nasty big companies. There are about four non-New Zealanders working for us in New Zealand out of a total of about 1800 employees." ('Secret Comalco Pressure Alleged', 1980). In response to the company attempting to portray itself as more local, CAFCA went to some effort to research and publicise the corporate structure of the company and its dominant foreign shareholdings ('Comalco Putting on a Disguise', 1976).

This led CAFCA to take an interest in other companies who looked like they were from New Zealand but in fact had quite substantial overseas ownership, and were arguably overseas controlled (B. Rosenberg, personal communication, 20 January 2016). This became a theme in

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CAFCA's work, such as their critical examination of companies such as Infratil, Carter Holt Harvey, Brierley Investments and the various iterations of Fletchers over the years. Examples include Horton (1998d). While the Overseas Investment Office defines Infratil (and a few other companies) as "foreign owned but New Zealand controlled" on account of these companies being listed in Schedule Four of the Overseas Investment Regulations, CAFCA rejects this distinction as it believes the fact that Infratil has more than 25 per cent foreign ownership as the more essential point (CAFCA, 2010). Between 1996 and 1997, CAFCA successfully campaigned to remove Brierley Investments from this list following changes to its ownership, even though the company found a loophole to avoid a forced sell down of its shareholding in Air New Zealand (Birss, 1997; Peters, 1997). Leigh Cookson thinks CAFCA helped to define what a transnational corporation is and what foreign investment means in a New Zealand context, "because things that look like New Zealand companies aren't New Zealand companies" if you look beyond the marketing hype. She thought "our understanding of who owns what and why is broadened by CAFCA" (L. Cookson, personal communication, 5 May 2015).

Chapter 8: The Contribution of Roger

From 1997, CAFCA organised the annual “Roger” Awards for the worst transnational corporation operating in New Zealand. The awards were judged based on a set of criteria, including “economic dominance”, “impact on people”, “environmental damage” and “running an ideological crusade”. In this chapter I will examine the impact and influence of the Roger Award in public debates in New Zealand, and use it as an example of how civil society organisations can play a political role in civil society. For the purposes of this discussion I will use the 1997, 2003, 2004 and 2013 awards as the core case studies.

The Roger Award may provide one example of how civil society organisations can contribute to public debates, both for CAFCA and the other civil society groups which utilised the Roger Award process to highlight issues on which they were campaigning. Building on the discussion of CAFCA’s relationships in Chapter 5, I will explain how the Roger Award helped CAFCA to deepen its links with other civil society actors, as well as allowing CAFCA to broaden the range of issues it could make public comment on.

Often the Roger Award had its greatest impact when it provoked a reaction from the companies targeted by the awards. These provide the most direct examples relevant to Dahl’s conception of influence in that the companies acted where they would not have done so otherwise. The appointment of well-known figures as judges also helped to generate publicity and controversy around the Award. A most notable example was the involvement of Sukhi Turner, who acted as a judge for the Roger while serving as the Mayor of Dunedin, provoking criticism of her involvement from within her council and in newspaper editorials.

Despite the near 20 year longevity of the Roger Award, in 2017 CAFCA decided to bring the campaign to a close. I will examine the reasons for this decision, as it relates to the discussion in Chapter 5 regarding the ability of CAFCA for critical self-reflection and renewal.

The Roger Award best exemplifies CAFCA’s creativity and use of humour and satire to project their political points. The leading personalities who instigated and maintained the Roger Award, Murray Horton of CAFCA and Leigh Cookson of GATT Watchdog, both possess a wonderfully active sense of humour.

I will begin by explaining the initial inspirations for the Roger Award and how it operated.

57. Background and inspiration for the award

In 1996 GATT Watchdog, CWS and CAFCA met in the Christchurch office of CORSO to discuss new strategies to challenge the prevailing environment of right wing neoliberal politics and corporate propaganda (Horton, 2011). One of the attendees, education academic David Small (CORSO) suggested a satirical “award” for the worst behaving corporation.

“The idea was simply to fight back in the propaganda war, to point out the obvious fact that these transnational corporations are the most important players in the NZ economy, that what they do affects every one of us in all aspects of our daily lives, and to hold them publicly accountable for the enormous negative impact they have on our country.” (Horton, 2011).

In another satirical twist, the awards were named in (dis)honour of two key proponents of neoliberalism in New Zealand, Roger Douglas and Roger Kerr. As finance minister in the Fourth Labour Government Douglas was a key player in driving through neoliberal economic reform from 1984 onwards. As head of the free market-oriented think tank, the Business Roundtable, Roger Kerr wielded influence over policy during the Fourth Labour Government and the subsequent National administration (Harris & Twine, 1998). Following the sale of state assets for what many perceived to be fire sale prices, some likened the association of the name with piracy, as in “Jolly Roger”, whereas others thought of the more vulgar popular use of the verb (Choudry, 2001).

The likely inspiration for the Roger Award is the annual list of the ten worst corporations US left wing magazine *Multinational Monitor* compiled from 1988 (Mokhiber & Falloon, 1988; Weissman, 2008). This included a short profile of each company, highlighting how their behaviour impacted on the environment, workers and consumers. In June 1991 CAFCA reprinted in *Watchdog* an excerpt from *Multinational Monitor*'s list for 1990 relating to RTZ/Comalco (Mokhiber, 1990). CAFCA's own Corporate Code of Responsibility (CAFCA, 1998), developed by Bill Rosenberg between 1995 and 1998, may have influenced the Roger Award criteria. In preparation for the first Roger Award in 1997, Aziz Choudry of GATT Watchdog was asked to check what process was followed by *Multinational Monitor* in preparing its list (CAFCA, personal communication, 1 April 1997). Participants also identified other satirical awards with similarities to the Roger such as the ‘Ernie’s’, which has been awarded by Australian feminists since 1993 for comments deemed misogynistic, named in honour of Ernie Ecob, a former Australian union secretary infamous for his sexist remarks (Burgmann & Andrews, 2017).

As a project the Roger Award was not without risks. At times New Zealand has not offered the easiest climate for political satire. Most notable were the Christchurch based duo of David McPhail and John Gadsby, who hosted a number of political comedy sketch shows from the late 1970s to the late 1990s. McPhail noted: “There was nothing before us. The idea of doing impressions of public figures had never happened” (Gates, 2015). Despite the popularity of McPhail and Gadsby, critics panned it and television executives cancelled the series in 1998, amid the rise of reality television and a suggestion by the *Southland Times* that state owned TVNZ did not want to upset their political masters (‘Gadsby’s Greatest’, 2015; Vasil, 1998). It is notable that the first Roger Award was presented the same year.

The Roger Award trophy itself embodied a satirical spirit. It could have be a prop in a low budget dystopian Terminator movie, incorporating a bullet, a hypodermic needle and a dollar note. A small pirate flag sat atop a globe of the world to symbolise the malign role played by the worst in globalised business.

58. The Roger Process

Organisers welcomed nominations for the Roger from organisations and members of the public, subject to a number of conditions. The focus of the Roger Award was the behaviour of transnational companies in New Zealand over the previous calendar year. Companies were only eligible if they meet the New Zealand definition of a foreign company, which is defined in the Overseas Investment Act as more than 25% foreign-owned. Every year the Roger Committee rejected nominations on these grounds. Companies and organisations deemed ineligible have included Fonterra, Air New Zealand and state-owned enterprises such as Solid Energy. There was usually an ineligible nomination for “The Government”. In 2006 organisers received a detailed nomination for the global environmental group Greenpeace. While it was acknowledged that Greenpeace did share some similarities with a transnational corporation, Horton reports “we took it seriously, discussed it and decided not to advance it any further.” (Horton, 2007a).

The first Roger Awards were organised by GATT Watchdog, CAFCA and CORSO. In 2000 an internal dispute within CORSO led to the expulsion of the Christchurch group from their national body (Martin, 2001). This also ended the association of CORSO with the Roger Award. CAFCA and GATT Watchdog then took responsibility for the Roger Award on alternate years until the mid 2000s, after which CAFCA took on primary responsibility for the event (Horton, 2005d). GATT Watchdog began to wind down in the 2000s following the move of key activist

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Aziz Choudry to Canada. While GATT Watchdog were no longer listed as an organiser of the Roger after the 2012 award, a ‘Roger Award committee’ continued to function when required. This consists of the CAFCA committee alongside former GATT Watchdog activists Leigh Cookson and Gillian Southey. Cookson (personal communication, 5 May 2015) explains that GATT Watchdog was never closed down, “we just sent it on holiday, and Murray did more and more work, but we have stayed on that Roger committee”.

Despite changes to the composition of the groups organising the award, the process in finding the Roger Award remained consistent through the years. Calls for nominations were made in *Watchdog* and in bulk emails to members and supporters. Other sympathetic organisations such as the Green Party, trade unions and other special interest groups also circulated nomination forms amongst their own members (Horton, 2008a). Nominees were encouraged to provide supporting information such as news clippings relating to the alleged misdeeds of the corporate transgressor. The Roger committee then chose around six “Roger Award finalists” from the nominations. Also, some companies have been directly nominated by members of the committee if they have felt that a clear candidate for the Roger has been missing from the nominations. The committee then worked to supplement the information on the finalists sent to the judges. In cases where little evidence has been provided writing such a nomination can represent a significant research task. The Roger Awards were judged by a panel of academics, politicians, business people, trade unionists and activists who volunteer during their summer holidays to pour over a wealth of information relating to the purported misdeeds the finalists. The ‘winner’ was announced at an awards ceremony typically held in April or May, in front of an audience of activists and media. Following the speeches and sometimes a song, documentation relating to the winner was released. This included a ‘Judges statement’, and a ‘Roger Report’, providing a detailed commentary on the misdeeds of the winner. From the 2003 award, Sue Newberry, a Professor of Accounting, also provided a ‘financial analysis’ of the ‘winner’.

Newberry’s involvement began when she met Bill Rosenberg at a union meeting at the University of Canterbury, and liked the idea of an award for the ‘worst company’. This led Newberry to have a look at the ‘Roger reports’ on the ‘winners’. While she found general comments about companies profiteering she considered the analysis lacked any sort of financial aspect: “If these companies are doing the sorts of things they are being accused of then the chances are there’s financial activities that would be worth a look as well”. She considered that this weakness was not isolated to CAFCA or the Roger Award, as she noted that “there tends to be a divide, people who are involved in activist kinds of things, often have no financial

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knowledge, and so they will be saying things about organisations without perhaps the understanding that might come if they understood the financial aspects of it". Bruce Jesson (1997), a journalist who attempted to bridge this divide, expressed similar sentiments when he suggested that an indifference to economics amongst the Left in New Zealand meant that activists often attempted to evaluate economic and financial arguments solely from a "social and moral point of view".

Newberry suggested to Rosenberg that the Roger organisers consider including a financial analysis of the companies to which they give the award. Sensing that Rosenberg wasn't that interested or was unsure as to who would be capable of conducting such analysis, Newberry decided that it needed to be done. On a chance meeting with Chief Roger Judge John Minto in Auckland, Newberry managed to "squeeze out" the secret that Juken Nissho was to be the winner. In conducting the first financial analysis of the Roger Award winning company, Newberry had no idea she would be still be undertaking this voluntary job 12 years later.

In her financial analysis of Juken Nissho, Newberry found that between 1999 and 2003 Juken Nissho reported losses and paid no tax. Without the support of its parent company and bankers, the company would be insolvent.

"It reports a massive shortfall in working capital each year which suggests that it has extreme difficulty operating on a day to day basis because of inability to pay its bills. Because of the negative equity from 1999 to 2001, the company was totally debt financed. Now it is predominantly debt financed" (Roger Award, 2003)

Newberry also noted that many of Juken Nissho's transactions appear to occur through related parties and may allow the company to shift profits offshore to avoid tax.

Newberry's analysis broke new ground for the Roger Award and brought to the attention of the public the kinds of issues that are only occasionally covered by financial journalists, drawing on Newberry's expertise as an academic accountant. Bill Rosenberg (2004a, 2004b) highlighted Newberry's analysis in opinion pieces published in the Christchurch *Press* and *The Independent* in late 2004 in which he called for tighter rules on foreign investment. In a speech marking the 10th anniversary of the Roger Award in 2008, Murray Horton played tribute to Newberry's work, saying she did a "superb job of translating the winner's arcane financial accounts into plain English, often to devastating effect. She has added a whole new dimension to the annual Judges' Report since she volunteered her services to write a proper financial analysis" (Horton, 2008a).

59. The Roger Begins

The beginning of the Roger Award attracted national media attention, including the Evening Post ('New Award Recognises "worst" Firms', 1997), Waikato Times ('Worst Company Award', 1997; Holloway, 1998), Manawatu Evening Standard (L. Matthews, 1997) and Sunday Star Times (Newth, 1998). It provoked an anonymous writer at one of the business papers to say: "Christchurch's trendy lefties evince a xenophobia born of blind patriotism. Either that or they suffer from moral shortsightedness....homegrown ratbags need not apply." ('Scuttlebutt', 1997). From a pool of twenty nominated companies, nine finalists were selected in December 1997, including Brierley Investments, Coeur Gold (gold mining), Comalco, Independent Newspapers Ltd (INL), Juken Nissho (forestry), Lion Nathan (liquor), Tranz Rail, Telecom and Westpac Bank (Horton, 1998b; Newth, 1998).

A ceremony to announce the 'winner was held on 28 February 1998 as part of the 'Taking Control' activist conference (see Chapter 5). The inaugural Roger was awarded to Tranz Rail, the former state owned rail operator which had been bought by US rail operator Wisconsin Central and partners in a controversial privatisation in 1993. A statement from the judges outlined their reasons:

"The critical factor in choosing Tranz Rail was the calculated, callous attitude it has shown to the people it has injured and the families who have lost their loved ones through its negligence and workplace practices. Despite public outrage and sympathy for the plight of six year old Morgan Jones, and workers like 35 year old Jack Neha killed in Tranz Rail's shunting yards, the company continued to play hard-ball politics to avoid its legal liabilities. This attitude has permeated from the top - Chief of Wisconsin Central Transportation, the main shareholder of Tranz Rail confessed he was "a little bewildered by why so much has been made" of the Morgan Jones case. The judges believe Tranz Rail has abdicated its moral responsibility by putting profits before people."
(‘Judges Statement’, 1998)

Gold mining company Coeur Gold and Independent Newspapers Ltd (INL) were judged as equal runners up. Dunedin Mayor Sukhi Turner, Maori lawyer Annette Sykes, academic Jane Kelsey and activist Chris Wheeler acted as judges.

60. Roger Judges

A number of participants identified the calibre of the Roger judges as key strength of the Roger Award, including former Green MP Keith Locke: "One of the most impressive things I've found with the Roger Awards is the way [the organisers are], able to construct a good list of judges.

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Included some people I would have thought at the beginning to be unlikely” such as former All Black Captain Anton Oliver and the former British MP Brian Gould (K. Locke, personal communication, 2014).

“What is interesting about the Roger Award is that it is totally dependent on people’s goodwill, the people who judge it, obviously have to go to a lot of effort, to do that. It’s a totally volunteer, smell of an oily rag job, and basic things you just nurture. Might provide a model for others too.” (S. Newberry, personal communication, 23 January 2015). Despite the work involved, many judges considered it to be a positive experience. Some noted it was also a useful way of improving their own knowledge of the transnationals and the issues involved (J. Jesson, personal communication, 16 June 2014). Roger Judge Christine Dann reflected:

“It’s an interesting thing that it does work when you have people who are strangers. I think it is probably one of the secret success things, if you....look at the different range of people and how they have communicated with each other over the years...I can’t think there would have been anything [else like that] sociologically. It’s an interesting phenomenon and it probably deserves more attention.” (C. Dann, personal communication, 20 December 2014)

This is an interesting reply to those such as Putnam who have claimed the contribution to civil society of political CSOs can only be ‘tertiary’. As judges often lived at opposite ends of the country it was rare for them to deliberate in person.

In an article marking ten years of the Roger Award, Murray Horton paid tribute to the judges: “The calibre and dedication of these completely unpaid people, who give up part of their summer holiday to cruise through this corporate sewer in a glass bottomed boat makes all the difference to the success of the Award.” (Horton, 2008a)

The appointment of well-known figures as judges for the Roger Award has often helped generate publicity and controversy around the Award. An editorial in the major Dunedin newspaper, the Otago Daily Times, criticised Mayor Turner for acting as a judge in the Roger Awards, calling it an "an act of silliness neither she nor the city needs". She also faced criticism from within her own council, with Dunedin City Councillor John Bezett saying Turner was wrong to be associated with the awards (Rudd, 2003).

Turner also faced criticism from the winning company. TranzRail Corporate Relations Manager, Fred Cockram, said “I’m particularly surprised that the Mayor of Dunedin would be associated with something like this.” noting TranzRail’s support for Dunedin’s air ambulance service (Taylor, 1998). In response Turner said: “We do live in a democracy, and surely I have the right

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to take part in the judging of contests of this sort. Everybody should be up for scrutiny and be accountable for their deeds and misdeeds. Does paying money out to causes make it all right what they (Tranz Rail) have done in the past?" (Taylor, 1998). Sukhi criticised again (Gorman, 2003)

Tranz Rail spokesperson Cockram claimed the judges were working on the basis of "supreme ignorance" about what companies such as Tranz Rail put into New Zealand (Taylor, 1998). Given his attitude it is somewhat surprising that Cockram rang Horton to request physical possession of the Roger Award by the next Friday (Horton, 1998b). In response to press enquires, Cockram was unable to confirm or deny he had intended to use the Roger Award at a publicity event where Tranz Rail were to hand over a cheque for \$2 million for a rescue helicopter for the Otago region, an event Mayor Sukhi Turner was expected to attend (C. Hutching, 1998). On behalf of the Roger Award organisers, Murray Horton told Cockram he could not have the award because he didn't think he would get it back. Horton offered to stage a photo outside the former Christchurch Railway Station, but on not hearing back posted a copy of the Roger Report and a laminated certificate to the company (Horton, 1998b). In November 2000 Cockram announced TranzRail would not be renewing its sponsorship of the Dunedin air ambulance as all sponsorship was being reviewed due to company restructuring (Cosgriff, 2000). There was also a reaction from INL newspapers. While the *Christchurch Press* ran a story on the Roger Award and the fact the owner of the paper was one of the runners up, Horton (1998b) was advised by an INL journalist at another paper that his story was spiked by the chief reporter due to the INL reference. In response to comments from Roger Judges that INL newspapers presented "no independent, responsible contest of ideas" and that "INL's biased view of the world can be equated to a dangerous propaganda machine which deeply influences the hearts and minds of New Zealanders", INL managing director Mike Robson claimed each newspaper possessed editorial independence and no attempts were made to influence the editorial line taken: "Obviously the judges don't bother to read the wide range of INL publications. They have a great variety of views about almost any question under the sun." (Taylor, 1998). Turner stood by her comments as a Roger Judge in the *Otago Daily Times* and admitted that INL would have been her preferred winner, noting that the voting of the judges between INL and Tranz Rail had been close (Barrett, 1998). She said the evidence the judges considered did indicate a bias, such as the prominent coverage given to the New Zealand Business Roundtable, most notably in INL's *Christchurch Press*. Robson (1998) responded again in a letter to the editor claiming the comments of the Mayor were "emotionally charged fiction" and denied that major shareholder

Rupert Murdoch had ever intervened in editorial matters. The Otago Daily Times (ODT), not an INL paper, also devoted an editorial to the debate instigated by the Roger Award ('Mayoral Principles', 1998). The ODT noted the attitude of the Mayor had previously earned her the ire of the establishment, and warned her that her personal views also reflected on the city and "she should think most carefully about how her remarks will be interpreted", noting its potential impact on the Otago air ambulance and upcoming negotiations about to be undertaken by the city over access to railway lines. Turner fired back in her own letter to the editor: "I would like to remind the writer of the editorial entitled 'Mayoral Principles' (5.3.98) that the Dunedin mayoralty is not at the beck and call of any sectional interest in the city, least of all the so-called 'establishment'." ('Mayor "amazed" at Paper's Stance', 1998)

Turner continued in her annual role as Roger judge until the 2003 award with the exception of 2000. She took some pride in her involvement with the awards, saying there was no reason why "mature economic communities" could not assess the impact multinational corporations were having on New Zealand; "I think it is a fairly good thing to do. What are we scared of? Is it because these companies are big business? We should scrutinise them. Everyone should be accountable." (Rudd, 2003).

Tranz Rail won the Roger Award three times in the first six years. Following nomination in 2002 senior Tranz Rail management made contact with each of the judges and Murray Horton individually, offering to meet in person to explain why the company should no longer feature in the award on account of its improved behaviour. Following its 'win' of the Roger in 2002, Tranz Rail was shunted into a 'hall of shame' and deemed ineligible for future nominations of the Roger Award, "to let someone else have a go" (Horton, 2008a).

61. Ministers, companies and embassies respond

The 2003 Roger Award presentation was held in Dunedin, where Turner, speaking on behalf of the judges, extended her allotted ten minutes to an impassioned hour (Horton, 2004b). A journalist at *The Press*, Paul Gorman reported on the speech: "She took pains, on several occasions, to explain she was not anti-business, but rather anti-bad business, and no less than eight times blamed the media for the way they portrayed her and for their lack of interest in the awards - strange, one might think, when journalists from the two major South Island newspapers had turned up." (Gorman, 2004b).

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Japanese forestry company Juken Nissho was announced as the ‘winner’ on account of “its arrogant disregard for the welfare of the Kaitia community with the emissions from its triboard plant” and a health and safety record that resembled a “war casualty list”, including the death of a worker in 2003. (*Roger Award*, 2003). The local Northland newspaper, *the Northern Advocate*, carried a response from the company to the Roger Award. Juken Nissho General Affairs Manager, Mike Fisher, said the safety and environmental issues alluded to by the judges had already been well “traversed by interested parties at local and central government level”, and claimed the company had made “significant improvements” since the issues were first raised (NZPA, 2004). As well as another article in *The Press*, the Roger Award also gained coverage in the Dominion Post (‘Roger and Me’, 2004), NZ Herald (‘The Biz’, 2004), Waikato Times (‘Mill Owner Hits Back’, 2004) and Otago Daily Times (Goodger, 2004).

Following this coverage, Murray Horton received an unexpected call from the Japanese embassy⁴¹.

“The hapless economic adviser who rang me had a whole list of prepared questions that she had been instructed to ask me, mainly about our processes as organisers, the judges’ processes in selecting the winners... how long had the Mayor of Dunedin been involved, and, the key question, does the Overseas Investment Commission (OIC) take the Roger Award into consideration when approving or declining foreign investment applications? We’d love to know the answer to that and have asked the OIC to enlighten both the Embassy and us.” (Horton, 2004b)

CAFCA then fired off the question posed by the Japanese Embassy to the Minister of Finance, Michael Cullen, the minister responsible for the oversight of the Overseas Investment Act, and suggested that Roger Reports should be “essential reading for all Ministers and officials involved in the review of the Overseas Investment Act.” (Horton, 2004b). This gained a reaction from the business pages of the *NZ Herald*, where it was noted that the “rabble rousing” CAFCA was “upping its agitating activity” (‘It’s Don’s Party’, 2004). While the *Herald* looked forward to Cullen’s “no doubt witty” reply, the response from Cullen was serious and respectful.

“I can assure you that all those involved in the Review are taking into account a wide variety of viewpoints, including those of your organisation. I understand that Treasury has met with Bill Rosenberg and discussed the views of CAFCA. It is worth noting that overseas and domestically owned companies operating in New Zealand are all required to comply with New Zealand laws and regulations. The issues raised by the Roger Award are not specific to the

⁴¹ This was not the first time CAFCA had elicited a response from an embassy. In 1981 the West German embassy bought 10 copies of *Bloodless Blitzkrieg*, a book published by the group (‘CAF CINZ Gets Money’, 1981).

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nationality of the company. While the safety record of Juken Nissho is disappointing, this company is subject to the same legal obligations and penalties for non-compliance as a New Zealand owned company. The Government would be interested in any suggestions you may have that would improve the regulation of all companies, both domestic and overseas owned” (quoted in Horton, 2004b)

CAFCA also posed the question suggested by the Japanese Embassy to the OIC. They included a copy of the Roger Report on Juken Nissho and asked how “people who exercise control” could be of good character, as required by the Act (Horton, 2004a). CAFCA also queried why the OIC gave approval for two proposals involving Juken Nissho in January 2004, and asked for these approvals to be revoked. The Commission responded in June, claiming to have considered the information provided by CAFCA to the extent that it is relevant to the Overseas Investment Act and Regulations, but concluded that the Commission remains satisfied that the persons who exercise control over Juken Nissho have previously and continue to be of good character. Despite CAFCA issuing a press release ‘OIC finds Roger Winner to be of good character’, requesting journalists ‘hold the front page’, the OIC’s response does not appear to have been reported by media, although CAFCA noted it themselves in *Watchdog* (Horton, 2004c).

This example shows how both New Zealand and foreign governments have taken notice of the Roger Award. It also speaks to the creativity of the CAFCA team and its immediate supporters in their portrayal of a sometimes dry and technical issue – foreign investment and its impacts – in a novel, satirical and popular form.

62. Strengthening civil society relationships

The following year telecommunications company Telecom won the Roger Award, with Contract Energy taking out second place and Malaysian forestry company Ernslaw One coming in third. The information utilised by the Roger Judges in relation to Ernslaw One came from Whangapoua Environmental Protection Society (WEPS), a group of locals who had been running a three year fight to stop the building of a large new sawmill on a farm in a picturesque part of the Coromandel Peninsula.

The comments of the Roger judges on Ernslaw One provoked a response from the Minister of Economic Development, Jim Anderton, who wrote to CAFCA in defence of the company.

“I see that the company Ernslaw One features in your most recent Roger Awards on the basis that it had been the source of a large number of job losses on the East Coast, and for reasons of health and safety regarding their sawmilling complex at Whangapoua. I don't mind a bit of political knockabout

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and I have always been mildly amused by these satirical awards, but in this case you have made a serious error. Neither of these accusations is correct. In fact when Ernslaw One purchased the Prime Sawmill in Gisborne, in October 2004, they committed themselves to a fourfold increase in processed logs, and the creation of an extra 30 to 40 jobs as this expansion occurs” (quoted in Horton, 2005b)

The company also responded in the Gisborne Herald, with Ernslaw One Managing Director Thomas Song saying the award was ‘grossly unfair’. But on reading the article, Murray Horton discovered that not only had Anderton repeated Song’s talking points, his words were the same or only lightly paraphrased. Horton responded by putting out a press release suggesting that Anderton needed to get himself another letter writer, “or should that be songwriter?” In July 2005, WEPS won a case in the Environment Court and prevented the mill expansion from going ahead (in 2010 the Prime Sawmill was closed and the factory mothballed). CAFCA celebrated WEPS victory and called on CAFCA members to financially support WEPS as it faced significant legal costs in the wake of the Environment Court action. Horton said he would like to “think the Roger Award played a small part in focusing attention on this appalling project” (Horton, 2005b).

While the credit for this victory rightly lies with WEPS, it was a victory based on long-standing work and relationships. The spokespeople for WEPS, Paul and Jean Bibby had a longstanding relationship with CAFCA from their work fighting mining transnationals as key activists for Coromandel Peninsula Watchdog in the 1980s and 1990s. CAFCA reported a number of times on the battle of the Bibbys and Ernslaw One in *Foreign Control Watchdog*, and published an article written by Jean Bibby (2004) herself. When the Bibbys opposed the application of Ernslaw One to acquire the site for the sawmill, they sent their correspondence with the OIC to CAFCA, allowing CAFCA to get a better handle on how such complaints were handled (Horton, 2002d).

Both Murray Horton and the Bibbys had been active critics of Ernslaw One since the early 1990s. Horton investigated the Malaysian parent company of Ernslaw One, Rimbanan Hijau, in his book *Clearcut* (Horton, 1995a) and both he and Paul Bibby featured in a 1994 ‘Frontline’ television documentary on TVNZ focusing on Rimbanan Hijau (Horton, 1995d). This programme later became the subject of a broadcasting standards authority (BSA) complaint, with the company taking particular issue with Horton’s comments. In its findings the BSA had no issue with the contributions of Bibby and Horton, but found that TVNZ’s should have included

other “independent” perspectives in support of Ernslaw as balance (BSA, 1995). In its defence, TVNZ described Horton as an acknowledged expert in the area.

While Ernslaw One only “earnt” a bronze medal in the Roger Award, this example demonstrates how other civil society groups have been able to utilise the Roger Award as a campaigning tool in their own battles with transnational corporations.

Another regular Roger Award finalist, British American Tobacco (BAT) won the 2008 award, following a nomination by Action on Smoking and Health (ASH), a group campaigning for greater tobacco control in New Zealand (ASH NZ, 2009). Ben Youdan (2009) from ASH made a well-received presentation ‘British American Tobacco: New Zealand’s worst transnational’ as part of the 2008 Roger Award ceremony held on 2 March 2009 (Horton, 2009b). BAT’s ‘win’ was reported by the NZ Herald, NZPA, Otago Daily Times and internationally in *Multinational Monitor* (A. Gibson, 2009; NZPA, 2009; Wedekind, 2009). Later that year, the win of the Roger by BAT was noted in an Otago University report on cigarette litter – butts and packaging in particular - and the tobacco industry (Mishra et al., 2009). This report also made use of the material from the Roger Report on BAT, noting how the company had had donated \$300,000 to the charity Keep New Zealand Beautiful.

I will now turn to the background to the 2013 award.

63. Rio Tinto and the Roger Award

Recognising the importance of the issue of climate change and the flaws in the design of the New Zealand Emissions Trading Scheme (NZETS), Wellington accountant Simon Johnson discovered that Rio Tinto Alcan Ltd (previously known as Comalco) were profiteering from the scheme by obtaining a free allocation of units that considerably exceeded the number of units they had to surrender. Johnson saw this as a clear domestic example of ‘corporate welfare’ and ‘regulatory capture’. Johnson posted his analysis on Gareth Rendowen’s ‘Hot Topic’, an influential blog covering climate science and policy in New Zealand⁴² (S. Johnston, 2011a; Royal Society of New Zealand, 2009b). Motivated by the “deep sense of the injustice” Johnson(2011b) also nominated the aluminium smelter owner for the 2011 Roger Award.

“NZAS/Rio Tinto has interfered in a democratic process via political lobbying through its industry advocate the Greenhouse Policy Coalition in order to

⁴² Rendowen’s website was a companion piece to a book(Renowden, 2007), also called Hot Topic, which made the shortlist for a Royal Society of New Zealand(2009a) science book prize in 2009(Priestley, 2017).

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dodge a tax (greenhouse gas pricing under the NZETS), and to profit from the ETS through excessive free allocation of emissions units... there is very little doubt that the NZETS unit allocation rules are so distorted that the smelter would face a higher carbon price if it were exempted from obligations under the NZETS and just paid its electricity bills". (S. Johnston, 2011b)

While Comalco was a regular finalist for the Roger Award, 2011 was the first year it won as Rio Tinto Alcan Ltd. Johnston's detailed nomination was quoted in the Roger Award judges report, which concluded that Rio Tinto's actions appeared to be "nothing more than a 'transnational corporate rort' of the ETS, subsidised by the New Zealand taxpayer... The significance of this stance cannot be underestimated; a major transnational player within New Zealand materially benefits from its non-compliance with a strategy to reduce global climate change and its ecological effects." (CAFCA, 2012). Johnston (2012) noted Rio Tinto's Roger win in another post on Hot Topic, describing the Roger Report and financial analysis as "well worth a read".

The report identified Comalco as a key political player in lobbying efforts against carbon taxes and emission trading since 1994 (CAFCA, 2012). In the face of a proposal for a carbon tax in 2005, Comalco threatened to close the smelter (Harding, 2008). When the government changed tack and proposed an ETS, Comalco told a select committee that while it supported the idea of an ETS in principle, it made it clear that unless the company was made completely exempt from meeting any costs under such a scheme, the policy would "most likely put the smelter on a path to closure" (CAFCA, 2012; Fallow, 2008).

In the accompanying financial analysis Sue Newberry challenged claims, likely to have originated from the company, that the smelter generated "around 1 billion" in export revenues (*Aluminium Record Set in 2011*, 2012; Smellie, 2011). Newberry estimated these economic benefits at closer to 20% of this figure (CAFCA, 2012). While CAFCA had been responsible for a number of revelations about the smelter in the 1980s and 1990s, Newberry's analysis represented the most significant contribution made by CAFCA to debate about the smelter for some years.

While the 2011 award received less media coverage than in previous years, Horton (2012a) noted that that this had always been CAFCA's experience when the ceremony was held in Christchurch as opposed to Auckland or Wellington. The timing of the ceremony, late on Friday night, was also a factor. The nomination of Comalco for the Roger Award and its 'win' was covered by *The Press* ('Roger Award List', 2011; Steeman, 2012) and *The Waikato Times* ('[Untitled]', 2012). *The Southland Times* noted the nomination ('Aluminium Smelter Finalist in Worst Trans-National Award', 2011) and also printed an opinion piece by Horton (2012b) in

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November 2012 referring to the smelter as New Zealand's 'biggest bludger' and highlighting the reasons for Comalco's win of the Roger Award earlier that year. Horton also highlighted Newberry's analysis that the export revenues generated from the smelter were a lot smaller than had previously been assumed. Outraged by the 'bludger' claim, Invercargill Mayor Tim Shadbolt (2012) said Auckland was New Zealand's biggest foreign bludger on the grounds many immigrants and refugees live there.

Yet despite the bad press generated by the Roger Award in 2012, Rio Tinto began to exert pressure on its major power supplier, Meridian Energy, over a power price contract due to take effect from January 2013. It did not matter to Comalco that the contract had already been negotiated. By issuing a threat to close the smelter, Rio Tinto also aimed to put pressure on the National government, who had plans to partially privatise Meridian and the other state owned power companies. If the country's largest user of electricity were to close, then this would have a big impact on the valuation of the power companies National were trying to privatise. Talks between Meridian and Rio Tinto stalled.

Despite Treasury advice that any government assistance would represent a significant transfer of value from New Zealanders to Rio Tinto, Prime Minister John Key phoned the company offering a subsidy to help secure agreement on a revised electricity contract ('Treasury: Tiwai Point Payment "Should Be Rejected"', 2013). On 23 March 2013, the government announced it had commenced direct negotiations with Rio Tinto and was offering unspecified assistance to the company to keep the smelter open in the short term (Smellie, 2013a). In August, the Government announced a \$30 million one-off payment to Rio Tinto to help secure agreement on a revised electricity contract between Meridian and Rio Tinto. While Rio Tinto promised to keep the smelter running until 2017, the notice period the company would have to give in the event of a closure was halved to 15 months. Finance Minister Bill English admitted the deal would help the partial sale of Meridian Energy as investors would have more certainty (Fairfax Media, 2013).

Despite the issue gaining a lot of media attention throughout 2013, CAFCA were not quoted as a participant in this debate, apart from a background article on the history of the smelter in April (C. Anderson, 2013) and the opinion piece published in the *Southland Times* in November. Following the announcement of the \$30 million subsidy in August, the *Christchurch Press* published part of CAFCA's press release as a letter to the editor (Horton, 2013d). The Timaru Herald and the Marlborough Express also published short reports announcing Korean fishing company Taejin Fisheries Co Ltd as the winners of the 2012 Roger Award, with Rio Tinto one of the runners up ('Roger Award Winner', 2013; "'Roger' Awards Dished Out', 2013).

CAFCA called on the government to “call Rio Tinto’s bluff (pun intended). Stop crying wolf, stop using your New Zealand workers as disposable pawns in your cynical game, stop holding Southland and the country to ransom. Go ahead and close the smelter and bugger off.” (Horton, 2012b). It is notable that a number of journalists and Labour party opposition spokesperson, David Parker, also suggested that closure of the smelter might not be the worst outcome (O’Sullivan, 2013; Smellie, 2013b; J. Weir, 2013). So while the debate moved in the direction of the position CAFCA long advocated, CAFCA did not receive much recognition. It is possible that CAFCA were not seen as offering anything new, as the rallying cry used by CAFCA above was the same as CAFCA used in 2008 in response to Rio Tinto’s threats to close the smelter due to the introduction of the ETS (Harding, 2008). That said, Rio Tinto’s threats to close were not new either.

Because of Rio Tinto’s rent seeking behaviour the company won the 2013 Roger Award, which gained coverage in *The Press*, *Southland Times* and the *NBR* (“Award” for Rio Tinto’, 2014; ‘Rio Tinto Award’, 2014; N. Gibson, 2014).

64. Assessing the Roger Award

Most participants believed the Roger Award had achieved its primary aim, that is, to highlight the negative impact of transnational corporations in New Zealand.

“I think its been a great institution and it has got increasing recognition. A lot of people know what the Roger Award is, and companies that are named for the Roger Award have their PR guys worrying about it, losing sleep at night in case they win, because it does have reputational effects on them. These reputational effects are never critical, they are never fatal, but they are part of the nibbling away at the foundations of their credibility if you like.” (G. Bertram, personal communication, 21 January 2016)

Yet others, particularly among those more critical of CAFCA, wondered about the extent to which the Roger Award had penetrated the consciousness of those outside of CAFCA and related activists. That said, many with this view were also aware of examples where information or activity relating to the Roger Award had reached new or unexpected places. Hence, we might characterise the Roger Award as having a substantive role in discussions relating to transnational corporations in New Zealand. It appeared to have more impact in its day than might be expected. Looking at the manner in which some of the ‘winners’ reacted, it cannot have been irrelevant. Interestingly, when a worker at a Roger ‘winning’ company was asked how they thought their fellow workers would react, they believed unionised workers would celebrate while those not in

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the union would not be greatly interested⁴³. The extent to which the award gained media coverage was also somewhat arbitrary. For example, the degree of media interest was also affected by the focus of the Roger Award each year. For example, if a company ‘won’ due to its behaviour during an industrial dispute, the media tended to be less inclined to report the award if the issue was no longer seen as current when the Roger was awarded in the following year.

Mary Ellen O’Connor believed the Roger Award had untapped potential;

“there needs to be more spoofing in through different media or something, because there is so much potential for really having a go, and making it funny, you know those American talk shows that rip into the corporates and what is going on, the Daily Show and [Jon] Stewart and things like that. I don’t know whether they are making any difference, either, but they are certainly poking the borax at in a very real ways aren’t they, making people just kind of just laugh at what is supposed to be so sacrosanct and important to this country and GDP.”
(M. E. O’Connor, personal communication, 16 May 2015)

Christine Dann was not surprised that the media coverage of the Roger was often poor, as “it’s not news that a bunch of you get to have a little fun at an awards ceremony” (C. Dann, personal communication, 20 December 2014). Rather than confining the fun inside, the comical dress ups, music and street theatre should be taken out into the street, potentially as part of a related event to the Roger ceremony. Dann also suggested that the ‘winning’ company become a focus for campaigning for the year following the bestowal of the Roger. Often the Roger gained media due to the participation of well-known judges or the reaction of companies to the award.

“when you think about it during the year, so these bastards win that year, and then the next year they continue being bastards, and unless you actually show them up, unless you can keep coming up with some of kind of way to get the media interested in their ongoing bastardry, then knowing what new wrinkle they have done is sort of irrelevant really.” (C. Dann, personal communication, 20 December 2014)

The example of Rio Tinto may provide an example here. If the Roger Award organisers had launched a sustained campaign against the smelter owners following their Roger Award win in 2011, it is possible that CAFCA may have had opportunities for greater contribution to the debate that led to the government providing a \$30 million dollar subsidy. Such a campaign could have played to CAFCA’s strengths both in terms of activism and unearthing relevant research material. It is easy to say this in retrospect. There would sometimes be risks in linking the “successful” award winner to a follow-up campaign-in-detail. It is possible, for example, that the

⁴³ Author interview

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Roger organisers could launch a campaign against a ‘winner’ only to find the company goes to ground and has an unusually quiet year, or the data needed to run an effective campaign was not forthcoming. The capacity issues within CAFCA, that is, the ability to run multiple campaigns on short budgets and limited staff, would also play a part in any decision to link the award to a follow-up campaign.

The inaugural Roger Award generated an extended debate in 1998 concerning the role of transnational corporations in society and the media coverage given to transnationals, most notably in the Otago Daily Times. Interestingly, the transnationals themselves raised the question as to whether involvement in community projects, such as funding of rescue helicopters, or donations to charities should discount any perceived negative impacts of their operations.

Leigh Cookson, a leading activist in GATT Watchdog, notes how the Roger Award has functioned as an educational tool.

“I really do think it was a useful campaigning tool in getting people to understand the role of transnational corporates in the state, with the state, the role of transnational corporates with neoliberalism, how capitalism actually works, who benefits and who suffers from it.” (L. Cookson, personal communication, 5 May 2015)

Yet Cookson also warns that in achieving this educational objective, the Roger Award may have “done its dash”, warning in 2015 of the danger that “is not just a repetitive pattern, and that’s not helpful”, and commenting that she felt the Roger Award had been in such a pattern for the last five years (op. cit). This view is also reflected in declining media coverage for the Roger Award. In 1998 the Roger generated at least ten stories in the New Zealand print media⁴⁴. The win by Juken Nissho generated eight stories in 2004, with six stories concerning Telecom in 2005, even though the Roger Award accounted for the largest number of media interviews on any subject Horton (2005d) did that year. Since that time, the Roger generated around two or three stories a year.

65. The Roger Ends

Following the 2017 Award, the Roger committee came to the decision to end the award, as they believed it “had run out of steam” (Horton, 2018). A dwindling number of nominations for the award had been received in recent years, which had meant organisers having to research and write more of the nominations themselves. They also noted that mainstream media coverage had

⁴⁴ According to the Newztext media database.

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continued to decline. Despite this, Horton (2018) reported the material collated for the Roger Award in previous years continued to be in demand as a source of information.

This suggests that a significant contribution of the Roger Award is as an extension of CAFCA's greatest contribution, acting as a journal of record. Auckland University of Technology (AUT) Professor of Communications, Wayne Hope⁴⁵, emphasises the importance of the work of CAFCA and the Roger Award to the New Zealand public sphere, as "they generate an archive" of how economic sovereignty has been eroded "year by year" (Isherwood, 2016). This also has international implications, as Hope cannot think of another country that sold its entire telecommunications infrastructure to overseas owners as New Zealand did with the sale of Telecom in 1990. Hope also notes how the Roger Award has kept a track-record of the role of the Australian banks in New Zealand (op. cit.).

The Roger Award has been discussed in Parliament a number of times. In 2006 Members of Parliament Sue Bradford (2006, p. 2304) and Hone Harawira (2006a, p. 4806, 2006b, p. 5229) highlighted the dubious honour bestowed on Westpac and the Bank of New Zealand, while in a debate on the Social Security (Long Term Residential Care) Amendment Bill Tariana Turia (2006, pp. 3093–3094) noted rest home operator Guardian Healthcare had been a finalist for the Roger Award in that same year.

While the impact of the Roger was largely dependent on the ebb and flow of media attention, this was assisted by the appointment of well-known figures as judges and instances where the award provoked a reaction from the companies that featured.

The institution of the Roger Award gained the benefit of CAFCA's long-running work, and became a logical extension of it. The nomination of Ernslaw One in 2005 may have been instigated by the controversy surrounding a proposal for a new sawmill, but it gained depth from the involvement of both WEPS and CAFCA in Coromandel environmental issues over many years, as well as established relationships between key activists. Similarly, the 'win' by Comalco in 2011 and 2013 was informed and buttressed by CAFCA acting as a journal of record and key critic of Comalco since the Resistance Ride in 1975. The Roger Award also reinforced CAFCA's strengths in terms of research and analytical ability, as well as good humour, with Horton describing the Roger as 'serious fun'.

⁴⁵ Hope acted as a Roger Award judge between 2009 and 2013

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In seeking nominations from other civil society groups and members of the public, the Roger Award helped CAFCA develop and deepen its relationships with other civil society actors, as it provided both agency and a means for civil society to raise concerns about the behaviour of transnational corporations in New Zealand. The Roger process also provided a new mechanism for the involvement of CAFCA members and other civil society actors in the direction of CAFCA, and CAFCA gained knowledge of potential issues to campaign about which it would not have known about otherwise.

The Roger Award also allowed CAFCA to broaden its horizons beyond foreign control, such as giving CAFCA a chance to demonstrate its pro-worker sympathies by making contributions to debates concerning industrial relations and health and safety. These concerns were highlighted by the ‘wins’ by TranzRail, supermarket operator Progressive Enterprises, Carter Holt Harvey and Juken Nissho. New Zealand has a poor record of worker deaths – New Zealand regularly ranks last in comparisons with similar OCED economies (Lilley et al., 2013). While the deaths of 29 men in the Pike River mine in 2010 led to a substantial strengthening of New Zealand’s health and safety laws with new legislation in 2015, the Roger Award played its part in highlighting the issue in the years before Pike (Goodger, 2004; Gorman, 2004a; NZPA, 1998).

The Roger Award trophy also found a new home when it was accepted into the collection at Canterbury Museum in February 2019. A curator at the museum, Dan Stirland, said acquiring the award “represented an opportunity for the Museum to collect something unusual, anti-establishment and counter-cultural, but with local and national significance. It is perhaps not the kind of treasure you’d usually expect to see in a museum, but we believe it reflects an important aspect of modern society” (Canterbury Museum, 2019).

The Roger Award, particularly when buttressed by Newberry’s financial analysis, helped to address the weakness amongst the activist left identified by Jesson in that it encompassed the social, moral and economic impact of transnational corporations in New Zealand.

The Roger Award possessed something of the satirical spirit of Thomas Veblen, who realised the pride, pomposity and insecurity of the ultra-rich in late 19th century America made them vulnerable to a particular type of ridicule (Galbraith, 1977, p. 58). As Horton (2011) puts it, the Roger Award exploited a weakness of its transnational targets “like all big bullies, not only do they want to be feared, they also want to be loved.”

Chapter 9: Conclusion

While Annual General Meetings have a reputation for being boring, the 1993 CAFCA AGM is memorable for a damning judgement: “This has got to be the most unsuccessful campaign in New Zealand history”.

This contribution came from none other than Owen Wilkes, one of the founders of CAFCA. Owen repeated this claim on multiple occasions. As noted in Chapter 5, Owen became disillusioned with activism following his “retirement” from the peace movement in 1992. In 1998 Owen wrote an angry letter to CAFCA described by Horton (2005c) as “a blistering seven pager (with 20 footnotes) ripping the shit out of us”, and in particular taking exception to the findings of the Roger Award judges in relation to a US mining transnational. While his behaviour toward his “old mates in Christchurch veered from the odd to the downright offensive”, Horton attributed these outpourings to bouts of depressive illness (op. cit). While Owen’s ‘old mates’ disagreed with his assessment of CAFCA, it may have acted as an intellectual springboard for Bill Rosenberg’s (1995a) own critical examination in 1995, which I will discuss below.

In this concluding chapter I will summarise the main findings from this thesis and discuss the implications for the literature. I will give a broad overview of CAFCA’s contribution to political debate in New Zealand. I will then assess the success of CAFCA as a campaign and identify the key instances of impact through the lens provided by Dahl – making X do something that X otherwise would not have done. I will then discuss what CAFCA can tell us about how CSOs can act as a journal of record, alongside other roles that can be taken by nationally focused political CSO in civil society.

Conclusion

In considering the role of national political CSOs, I sought to answer four research questions.

Major Research Questions

Did CAFCA make a discernible contribution to political debate/public sphere in New Zealand in the period from 1975 to the present? If so, how? Did this contribution vary according to changes in the structure of New Zealand political economy?

Does CAFCA demonstrate how a civil society organisation can play a political role in civil society, particularly in an environment that is hostile to its aims? If so, how?

Minor Research Questions

Did the CAFCA magazine ‘Foreign Control Watchdog’, published from 1975 onwards, make a discernible contribution to political debate/public sphere in New Zealand? If so, how?

How influential was CAFCA’s satirical “Roger Award” for the “worst transnational corporation operating in Aotearoa”, and how does this campaign show how a civil society organisation can play a political role in civil society?

66. CAFCA’s contribution to political debate

The first question centres on the contribution of CAFCA to the public sphere and the political and economic environment in which it operates.

CAFCA’s most important contribution to political debate in New Zealand has been to act as a resource for other civil society actors, a journal of record. CAFCA’s work provides many examples of how ideas and information are generated and travel through civil society in New Zealand. While CAFCA’s work detailing the decisions of the Overseas Investment Office (OIO) provides the best example, CAFCA have also made key contributions to debates concerning the Tiwai Point smelter, the actions of privatised state owned enterprises and controversial land sales. The annual reports accompanying the Roger Award may be likened to a catalogue of corporate transgressions of societal expectations by foreign investors in New Zealand. CAFCA have also acted as a journal of record for those writing submissions to Parliament and related bodies.

Conclusion

Often CAFCA has the most impact when it releases unique or new information that address gaps in public and academic knowledge. The longevity of the organisation, the high levels of trust in the material and the disinterest, and in some cases, hostility, of governmental authorities to the releasing of such information into the public domain created an opportunity for CAFCA to act as a proactive journal of record. For example, when successive governments refused to collect accurate statistics on foreign land ownership in New Zealand, estimates provided by CAFCA became widely cited amongst the news media as a proxy for government-derived information, and as information with solid credentials in terms of accuracy.

While their focus remained on foreign control, CAFCA have also provided a long running critical analysis of the New Zealand news media. This not only incorporates their most significant academic contribution, tracking news media ownership, but also through their praxis of operation, most notably through the publication of their long running journal, *Foreign Control Watchdog*. A common style of Watchdog articles is to analyse and annotate published texts such as news reports, not only providing a commentary but unearthing new facts by publically dissecting and comparing news accounts. Graves (2015) describes this style as annotative journalism. Murray Horton may be the closest New Zealand ever gets to its own I.F. Stone, if you consider their similarities in style, interest in peace issues and the sheer amount of material produced over several decades.

Contribution to Comalco debate

Building on the climate of scepticism created by the Save Manapouri Campaign, Peter Lusk's articles in CANTA helped fuel Comalco as a focus for the Resistance Ride. This work then developed into the Comalco Comic in 1977, CAFCINZ's most significant contribution to public debate as the New Zealand government negotiated with Comalco. Press reports from the time indicate CAFCINZ were not a significant participant in this debate, as academics and environmental organisations acted as the prime critical voices.

While Jesson (1990) described CAFCA as Comalco's most tenacious and effective critic and Catherine Smith (1991, p. 12) says "Murray Horton has probably published more on the activities of Comalco than any other journalist and CAFCA's material is widely respected", these comments reflect CAFCA's longevity as well as its influence, as many of the other groups and individuals are no longer active.

Consistent with its role acting as a journal of record, many of the contributions by CAFCA to the Comalco debate have increased in stature over time. The Lewin letter gives a rare insight into the

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debates that occur within government over commercial negotiations with multinational companies and deepens the historical record in regards to Sutch's attitudes to Comalco, particularly as Sutch had been accused of inconsistency in accepting the Comalco shares. While CAFCA expressed some disappointment at the response from the media and others to the release of the Comalco documents in May 1980, some of the allegations made by CAFCA can now be corroborated by diplomatic communications not available at the time. These suggest that CAFCA did uncover a significant story providing an example of the methods large multinational companies use to sway and influence the actions of governments. The diplomatic cables provide strong evidence that CAFCINZ were right and that the New Zealand government was "leaned on" in the course of the negotiations with Comalco. By releasing the internal Comalco documents, CAFCINZ uncovered a very significant story in the face of stony public denials.

The release of the Comalco documents boosted CAFCA's credibility and profile on the Comalco issue in New Zealand and built lasting international links with other organisations campaigning against Rio Tinto internationally. Through the years CAFCA built on this work by releasing and analysing further information and analysis concerning the smelter project, and publicising this through its magazine *Foreign Control Watchdog*, commentary in the news media and through hosting public meetings.

Following the release of the Comalco papers, CAFCA did not achieve significant media coverage on Comalco again for nearly a decade. As the government and Comalco negotiated again over the power price in the early 1990s, CAFCA released a number of classified government documents relating to these negotiations and a proposal to sell the Manapouri power station to Comalco (Hutching, 1991; 'Kiwis "don't need to thank" Comalco', 1992). Others also made use of CAFCA material during this time. In the weekly *Listener* magazine, investigative journalist Bruce Ansley (1989b, 1993) summarised some of the battles between CAFCA and Comalco, with CAFCA also making use of Ansley's investigative work. Despite TVNZ backing away from a special programme in 1980, high profile current affairs show *Frontline* utilised CAFCA's files for two programmes investigating Comalco's relationship with the government in 1989 and 1993 (Wallington, 1993). While they covered material from the Comalco Papers and the debate in Tasmania, CAFCA were not attributed as a source ('Comalco', 1997).

While CAFCA have been responsible for a number of revelations about the smelter in the 1980s and 1990s, CAFCA did not place much focus on Comalco again until the company 'won' the 2011 Roger Award. The financial analysis of Rio Tinto accompanying the 2011 Roger Award

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represented the most significant contribution made by CAFCA to debate about the smelter for some years.

While CAFCA have made important contributions to the debate concerning the Comalco smelter, perhaps their role would be best described as keeping the fire burning, documenting the history and maintaining the issue while other groups and individuals made their critical mark.

CAFCA's Dahl moments

To identify the areas where CAFCA had the most impact, let us return to Dahl's conception of power/influence - instances where CAFCA got governments, other organisations and individuals to do things they otherwise would not have done.

CAFCA's five-year campaign to force the Overseas Investment Commission to operate with greater transparency represents its most significant direct contribution to political debate in New Zealand. The decision sheets now produced by the Commission are an example of a government department proactively releasing official information instead of waiting for a relevant official information request to be made. In ensuring a wider range of information was released as a matter of course, and providing valuable analysis of these decisions, CAFCA made a significant and lasting contribution to public and academic debate on overseas ownership. CAFCA kept up the pressure, appealing most attempts by the OIO to withhold information with the Ombudsman's office. In 2016, the Ombudsman called on the OIO to review its procedures, meaning that CAFCA, once again, forced a government agency to extend the information available to the public. CAFCA's dogged and patient use of the Official Information Act also led to the release of its security intelligence file from the SIS and forced Treasury to release key documents relating to Comalco.

CAFCA broke several significant news stories over the years. While it did not gather due attention at the time, the revelations in the Comalco papers released by CAFCA in 1980 are likely to be the most significant. This led to PARITZANS flying Bill Rosenberg to London and led to the publication of *Plunder*. In the early 1990s, CAFCA highlighted government plans to sell the Manapouri power station and issued a challenge to Comalco's claims with the Dean and Caygill memos. CAFCA also alerted the media to the importance of the Mt Pelerin Society meeting in 1990 and the review of the Overseas Investment Act in 2003.

Academics interested in foreign investment in New Zealand acknowledge the expertise of Bill Rosenberg on the subject, as evidenced by his invitation to write the chapter for the Enderwick book and the number of citations of his work. The work of CAFCA is cited over a wide range of

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disciplines and has acted as a resource for a number of thesis students working on New Zealand related topics. Academics have also made use of CAFCA material in their teaching and have provided articles to Watchdog as a means of placing issues on the public record.

Despite these examples of the wide-ranging contribution of CAFCA to public debate over the years, could it still be concluded that CAFCA were “unsuccessful”? Noting there was far more direct overseas influence in New Zealand in 1990 than in 20 years previously, Jesson (1990) came to a similar conclusion to Owen - “[a]lthough CAFCA wins the occasional battle, it has basically lost the war”. While CAFCA may have failed to alter significantly the policy direction of governments over its history, perhaps this is asking too much. Indeed, it could be argued that for a small organisation CAFCA has done more than might be expected. The ‘Dahl moments’ provide grounds in which to challenge Owen’s hyperbolic negative assessment. Indeed, I would suggest CAFCA appeared to be at the height of their powers between the employment of Murray as a full time organiser in 1991 and the departure of Bill to Wellington in 2009. I also note that Owen’s quip and Jesson’s judgement were both made immediately before the era CAFCA made its greatest impact, and may, as it were, miss half the story.

In a piece marking CAFCA’s 40th anniversary, Brian Easton commented on the success of the group.

“Certainly they have kept their concerns in the public headlines and sometimes there have been wins; the government’s recent rejection of a Chinese company’s plan to purchase more New Zealand farms was no doubt a response to their focus-group polls, but their members were implicitly or explicitly influenced by the widespread public concern which CAFCA has encouraged.” (Easton, 2015)

The Contribution of Watchdog

As the longest-running left wing magazine in New Zealand *Foreign Control Watchdog* provides an important archival resource, as well as a modern link to the Christchurch tradition of notable left wing publications. While this thesis began with a minor research question looking at the specific contribution of *Watchdog* I now think this is best seen in a wider context. It is interesting to note that CAFCA’s most cited research, the ‘Key Facts’ and the analysis of news media ownership, comes from CAFCA’s website rather than *Watchdog* itself.

Yet as a long running publication *Watchdog* continues to be appreciated as ‘part of the furniture’, even by those not as closely engaged by it. This is best captured by senior unionist Robert Reid.

“[I]t’s a funny thing, isn’t it, that CAFCA gives me – the fact I can see its magazine coming out each month, probably not reading one word of it, but it

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feels good – it actually keeps me going, because you know there is work happening behind, and now and again it will be referenced in something we do.” (Robert Reid quoted in Bradford, 2014)

While Tocqueville (1835) emphasised how newspapers can bring associations together, for CAFCA, *Watchdog* performs like an internal journal of record to enable CAFCA’s other research and campaigning efforts and to communicate them to its informal “association” of supporters and readers.

67. Does CAFCA demonstrate how a civil society organisation can play a political role in civil society?

CAFCA’s longevity is one of its most interesting and important characteristics. By surviving over 45 years, CAFCA endured through from the tail end of the Keynesian era into the neoliberal era and beyond. At the commencement of this research project this led to a question as to how this historical context had impacted on CAFCA and the contribution that it has made. The example of CAFCA suggests an interesting answer for political CSOs who are concerned that they and/or their message may be marginalised. In contrast to other organisations and individuals who became more marginalised and/or did not survive through the neoliberal period, this study concludes that an important factor in the survival of CAFCA was the fact that it had also been marginalised to an extent in the earlier Keynesian era. This meant that CAFCA could maintain its political independence and it did not fundamentally have to change its methods of operation like other organisations and individuals did so during the challenging period of neo-liberal experimentation. Another fundamental reason for the survival of CAFCA is the determination, dedication and skills of its key people.

Despite significant shifts in the political and economic environment, CAFCA won respect by maintaining a consistent position and playing ‘the long game’. To use Tony Benn’s (2013, p. 281) famous metaphor of signposts and weathercocks, CAFCA represent a signpost in the New Zealand political scene, clearly pointing the way while others have fluttered in the wind. While it is often claimed that groups should moderate their political demands to gain greater influence, CAFCA shows how maintaining a consistent and clear political line can allow CSOs to have greater influence, especially influence over a longer time period. This also requires sound political and organisational judgement, and a politics based on clear principles and ideas rather than short term convenience.

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The focus on foreign control provided CAFCA with a clear identity, and a means to concentrate its limited resources. In asking how each potential call on its time related to foreign control, CAFCA addressed the potential danger of spreading its energies too wide. While CAFCA's ability to 'stick to its knitting' represents a key strength, CAFCA also demonstrate an ability to be self-critical and adapt to changing circumstances. It is possible this ability was not always visible to outside observers.

An example is the incisive analysis offered by Bill Rosenberg to the CAFCA Committee Strategy meeting in 1995. Despite its ability to play the long game and wear down officialdom with its tenacity, Bill warned that CAFCA may be preparing for a future that may never arrive.

"Our failure is one of 'Real Politik, though we have been successful in predicting and educating, we have been an absolute and dismal failure in opposing foreign control in practice. Even with our greatest success, Comalco: though public suspicion of Comalco is high, even it is still prospering at our expense at Bluff. As Owen has told us: we are the most unsuccessful campaign in Aotearoa's history. In a practical sense he is perfectly right..."

..."[I]f the opposition we have been educating people for doesn't happen in (at the very latest) the next decade, CAFCA may well fold up as a brave but irrelevant, quaint historical curiosity to be studied by future political science students on the same basis as they might study the Luddites or Royalists: people swimming against the tide of history." (B. Rosenberg, 1995a)

Rosenberg (1995a) also suggested CAFCA should consider where it wanted New Zealand to be in ten years time: "I'd be pleased if we had something like this (I'm not very ambitious!):

1. "A noticeable and increasing trend in public opinion that is suspicious of TNCs, free trade, and the "open economy".
2. "Rolling back of at least some of the excesses of the past decade, including tighter restrictions on foreign investment and imports."
3. "Existing state functions still in state hands, and regulation of privatised monopolies or near-monopolies such as Telecom and the electricity supply authorities."

It is interesting to reflect on these statements now. While playing the long game failed to significantly shift government policy, the Fifth Labour government (1999 to 2008), perhaps reluctantly (J. Hendren, 2004b), bought back strategic state assets such as Air New Zealand and the railways. The unbundling of the local copper loop was an important step in weakening the private monopoly held by Telecom in the telecommunications market. Labour also introduced some greater restrictions on the purchase by foreigners of 'sensitive land'. However the Overseas Investment Act of 2005 also significantly increased the threshold for business purchases to \$100

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million, meaning that larger companies could be sold off without OIO oversight. In terms of electricity supply, Labour did not fundamentally change the structure of the market, and continued to operate the state owned electricity companies on a profit making basis – the following National government later sold down its stakes in these companies and Air New Zealand (Bertram, 2013).

Labour also strongly advocated and concluded bilateral free trade deals with Singapore, Chile, Brunei, Thailand and China. While it could be argued that the public opposition to the Trans-Pacific Partnership Agreement (TPPA) in 2015-16, and the decision of the Labour Party to oppose this agreement (A. Little, 2016)⁴⁶, may indicate a growing scepticism of free trade agreements, both Murray Horton and Bill Rosenberg give credit to the dedicated campaign of the “Its Not Our Future” group, among others, for this success. One of the most controversial issues concerned the inclusion of Investor-State Dispute Resolution (ISDS) in the proposed TPPA. Such provisions allow investors to sue governments for actions deemed to negatively impact on the value of an investment. It is also noteworthy that Labour in government signed up to a version of the TPPA in 2018, with no changes to the text of the main agreement apart from some provisions being suspended pending future USA involvement. While Labour signed side agreements with some countries to restrict the use of the ISDS provisions, investors in other TPPA countries will still be able to utilise ISDS (Kelsey, 2017).

In the overall assessment of the points raised by Rosenberg in 1995 there was no significant change in terms of Point 1. That said, there may be greater public scepticism of specific aspects of trade agreements such as ISDS. There appears to be some greater movement in terms of points 2 and 3, even if this change is somewhat inconsistent at times. Perhaps the most salient point in relation to Rosenberg’s 1995 assessments is that CAFCA continued to exist 20 years afterwards.

CAFCA’s own figures show FDI in New Zealand has increased from \$15.7 billion in March 1989 to \$129.8 billion in March 2020 (CAFCA, 2021). As a proportion of the total output of the economy, foreign direct investment represented about 22% of GDP in 1989. While this peaked in 2000 at 63%, FDI as a share of GDP has steadily declined since, sitting at 40% of GDP in 2020 (CAFCA, 2021). So while FDI in dollar terms has continued to increase since 1989, its share of the economy has reduced.

While there is little reliable data on how much New Zealand business is foreign owned, Rosenberg (2015) conducted an analysis in 2015 based on preliminary data he obtained from

⁴⁶ This page no longer exists on the New Zealand Labour Party website.

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Statistics New Zealand concerning both public and private companies. Rosenberg characterises the 1990s as distinguished by rapid growth in FDI, with much of this activity driven by privatisations and takeovers. Foreign ownership peaked at 49% in 2001, fell to a low of 23% in 2012 and then rose again to 25% in 2013. He notes this paints a remarkably similar picture to an annual survey conducted by JB Were on overseas ownership of shares publically listed on the New Zealand Stock Exchange. So while on CAFCA's terms the extent of foreign control of the New Zealand economy remains high, the escalation of such control is no longer as intense.

Following his move to Wellington in 2009, Rosenberg (personal communication, 11 September 2021) reports he encountered greater scepticism about foreign investment in official circles than he expected. This included concern at the continuing takeovers of innovative New Zealand firms and concern at the quality of FDI into New Zealand. This was even reflected in a cabinet paper from a centre-right National Government in 2015.

“We need to increase the quality of overseas investment, which means an active shift towards the tradable or innovation enhancing sectors, where investment is more likely to produce these additional benefits to New Zealand” (Joyce, 2015)

A similar focus is advocated by Easton (2015). While Rosenberg (personal communication, 20 January 2016) believes it was the “objective experience of the failures of the neo-liberal regime”, rather than the work of CAFCA that led to this greater scepticism of certain forms of FDI in official circles, it is also fair to say that CAFCA helped to detail and record that failure. It would be interesting to speculate as to whether work such as Rosenberg's detailed submission on the Overseas Investment Bill in 2005 played a small part in helping to shift the direction of travel.

CAFCA as a journal of record

CAFCA demonstrate how acting as a journal of record is one way in which a national political CSO can play a role in civil society. CAFCA demonstrate several factors that assist in this endeavour.

- The production of high quality information and analysis publicly available through a regular publication or a website.
- The ability to dissect and compare sources to uncover new facts.
- Stable, skilled leadership and personnel (helps build an institutional memory).
- The stability and longevity of the CSO matches the institutions and organisations of interest – in this sense both CAFCA and Comalco are survivors.
- The identification of a gap in public and/or academic knowledge.

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- A clear and/or specialised focus.

In CAFCA's case, the reluctance of successive governments to respond to public concerns over increasing overseas ownership and influence in the New Zealand economy, and a reluctance to make information available allowed CAFCA to become an informal authority on these issues, recognised even by its ideological opponents. At times, potential gaps in public or academic knowledge may not be immediately obvious. As the entrepreneur Steve Jobs famously noted: "A lot of times, people don't know what they want until you show it to them" (Reinhardt, 1998). In the internet age, some CSOs may be able to utilise big data to provide statistics, visualisations or data description methods that function in a similar fashion to a journal of record.

Greater access to source material may also provide opportunities. In July 2022, senior New Zealand journalist Rebecca MacFie appeared on *Radio New Zealand's* 'Mediawatch' programme. Commenting on how journalists could respond in the wake of Business New Zealand being accused of promoting misinformation, MacFie had this to say.

"There is acres of documents, there is acres of factual material. We have to sort of fight our way back to the source documents and report from that. I couldn't do that 30 years ago when I was reporting on the Employment Contracts Act. So it is paradoxically easier to get to the factual source documents than it has ever been really. I suppose that is my response to this use of misinformation is to go back to the originating documents and do the job."(MacFie in Donnell, 2022)

With source documents now more widely available on the internet and greater use of transparency initiatives such as the Official Information Act, this should create more scope for credible journal of record projects by CSOs, following the example of CAFCA and I. F. Stone.

The example of CAFCA demonstrates it is possible for politically radical organisation to act as a journal of record while maintaining a clear political line. Nor did maintaining links to activism appear to detract from CAFCA's credibility – the quality of the work spoke for itself.

Of all the factors listed above, a clear and/or specialised focus may be the most crucial– no organisation can expect to act as an encyclopaedia, particularly a small CSO with limited resources. While Bradford (2014, p. 149) noted that CAFCA met her working definition of a think tank apart from being broadly based across issues, perhaps meeting this particular criterion would be difficult for an organisation in a small country like New Zealand. That said, the example of CAFCA suggests think tank-like organisations could build organisational and research capability by developing a specialised research base that other work could then build on. In this sense CAFCA's database of the OIO decisions formed this function for CAFCA from

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the late 1980s onwards. A downside of acting as a journal of record is that the CSO is reliant on others making use of their work— this can mean impact can take years and the CSO may not receive credit that is due. While CAFCA play the long game, and play it well, CAFCA’s contributions can be understated as the evidence of these contributions is not always in the front and centre of political debate. Sometimes the contribution of CAFCA can best be seen in the ‘sweep of history’ and in the annotative forms of journalism and analysis that organisations like CAFCA undertake. This PhD has sought to identify and describe such phenomena more clearly. But nor is CAFCA’s role contingent on a particular time. The profile or impact of a CSO acting as a journal of record may be likened to a whale surfacing from the ocean. While it may spend a lot of time nourishing itself under the waves, it emerges from time to time in different conditions, sometimes making a splash, sometimes a smaller ripple. If it senses an opportunity it may bow-ride on the pressure waves created by others.

Other political roles undertaken by CAFCA

While acting as a journal of record is their most important contribution, CAFCA also demonstrate other ways a national political CSO can play a role in civil society, such as campaigning for greater government transparency. In forcing government agencies to release information relating to national security and foreign investment, CAFCA extended the reach and operation of the Official Information Act to the benefit of all civil society. It is a good example of how social movements can act as “the central bearers of democratizing pressures within Western democracies” (Foley & Edwards, 1996, p. 3). Other roles have stemmed through CAFCA’s activism and political organising, such as the Resistance Ride, protests outside conferences, making submissions to government and encouraging others to do so. The Roger Award encompasses a wide range of roles, including public education, research, publication and activism, with the aim of holding transnational corporations to account for the negative impacts of their operations. In acting as a counterweight to both state and corporate power, CAFCA demonstrate the political role of CSOs as described by Michael Edwards:

“[V]oluntary associations are seen as crucial counterweight to state and corporate power and an essential pillar of promoting transparency, accountability, and other aspects of democratic governance” (M. Edwards, 2020, p. 13).

The name of CAFCA’s journal *Foreign Control Watchdog* is a strong signal of this intention, and the Roger Award is a good example of how this can be done in practice.

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In terms of influencing the actions of ministers some ‘Dahl moments’ can be identified. Not many small organisations have triggered two different governments to propose specific legislation in response to their campaigning activity, and fewer still have been then spared the instigation of parliamentary sovereignty. CAFCA’s long running campaign to strengthen the Overseas Investment Act has also borne fruit. While policy on FDI continues in a liberalising direction in some respects, it could be said that the attitude of recent New Zealand governments is tending towards ‘pick and choose’ rather than *laissez faire*. The recent proposals to introduce a national interest test and broaden the ‘good character’ requirements echo the campaigning foci of CAFCA. CAFCA’s research has also been the subject of ministerial business, from advising the Indonesian government on the assets of the Suharto family in New Zealand to assessing the impact of the proposed free trade agreement with Hong Kong. Various Ministers have also specifically responded to CAFCA either through the media or in direct letters, even if such responses have sometimes sought to marginalise CAFCA or dismiss its concerns. Even foreign embassies have taken an interest.

The Official Information Act acts as a key information source for CAFCA. The Campaign for Open Government (COG) is widely regarded as the key national political CSO which advocated for the introduction of the Official Information Act and monitored the operation of the Act in its first three years (White, 2012, p. 1). They were also critics of Comalco. Following the closure of COG in December 1984, it could be argued it was CAFCA who took on COG’s mission to make the levers of our society more accessible, as the subjects of focus to CAFCA such as foreign investment, defence and security matters represent the areas where governments are likely to remain most determined to maintain official secrets. Yet this determination was matched by CAFCA’s determination, appetite for long running battles and regular use of the Ombudsman. CAFCA also carried on the work of COG by demonstrating the weaknesses in the operation of the OIA, with the Overseas Investment Commission and Comalco as key areas of interest. CAFCA’s efforts to surface the “Tizard” memo demonstrate how a mixture of CAFCA’s tenacity and research skills were able to rebuff efforts by Treasury to keep particular Comalco documents secret. CAFCA first requested their Security Intelligence Service file in 1985. When they finally received their file 24 years later, it acted as a catalyst for other individuals to obtain their SIS files, and opened a debate on the legality of historical state surveillance of political campaigners.

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The fact that CAFCA, as small ginger group from Christchurch, achieved this level of influence despite the structural advantages of state and corporate power is impressive in itself, and may provide some useful lessons for similar organisations.

While CAFCINZ emerged from the New Left social movements of the late 1960s, it gained increasing strength from older left wing traditions in Christchurch more centred towards publishing and class. It is no surprise CAFCINZ emerged in Christchurch, the same city that had functioned as the headquarters of the cultural nationalist school a generation before. The development of CAFCINZ key activists may have also been assisted by aspects of Christchurch's political culture, such as the reputation for lower levels of sectarianism and the tolerance shown towards its more colourful characters. Not only was Christchurch the natural home for CAFCA, there would be a question as to whether it could have developed anywhere else.

Impact of marginalisation

Several factors contributed to the political marginalisation of CAFCA. Perceptions of Keynesian policies being discredited, along with an increasing influence of neoliberal ideas, and later claims of an international consensus in favour of neoliberalism and the Washington/Wellington Consensus, all contributed to place CAFCA's ideas outside the dominant neoliberal political and economic paradigm. It is possible that this position made CAFCA more important, particularly as other CSOs adapted their positions to a more neoliberal friendly stance, avoided economic issues or dwindled away. Yet CAFCA survived and continued to challenge the view that the state should have less involvement in the economy. Evidence from interviews suggest a number of New Zealanders may have looked to CAFCA to help them answer the neoliberal challenge.

While CAFCA was certainly marginalised by these forces, the fact that it survived suggests that the marginalisation was not complete, otherwise one would have expected CAFCA to have faded out like other organisations that dated from the Keynesian era. Yet if it was the case that CAFCA were also marginalised in the Keynesian era, this may have meant they were better positioned to survive than organisations that expected to be part of the mainstream.

There is also a sense in which there is a danger that the marginalisation of CAFCA could be overstated. If it had been the case CAFCA were completely marginalised and irrelevant, then one would not expect their opponents to attempt to marginalise them directly. Yet government ministers such as Michael Cullen, Doug Kidd, Maurice Williamson and most famously, Rob Muldoon, have given CAFCA attention. Equally, Horton's denunciation of the failure of the

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media to pick up on Muldoon's "blatant distortions" in their coverage of the Comalco papers suggests that Muldoon did partly succeed in his attempts to marginalise CAFCINZ at the time, even if the diplomatic cables now demonstrate CAFCA were on the right track.

The influence of the Roger Award

As a campaign the Roger Award achieved its primary aim – to highlight the negative impact of transnational corporations in New Zealand. While the initial award generated an extended public debate in the newspapers and the reputation of the Roger grew over the years in activist and union circles, it is more difficult to gauge the wider influence of the Roger amongst the wider public. A receipt of the Roger was never a critical blow for the transnationals, even if they were irritated by it. Geoff Bertram (personal communication, 21 January 2016) may have put his finger on it when he suggested the Roger Award played a part in "nibbling away at the foundations of their credibility".

The Roger Award created some 'Dahl moments' in that it caused a number of companies to respond to CAFCA. While forestry companies such as Juken Nisshio attempted to defend themselves in the media, TranzRail went from questioning the involvement of the Mayor of Dunedin as a judge to later making contact with the Roger Judges to ensure TranzRail didn't get 'Rogerred' again. Newspaper management from INL did not take kindly to their editorial independence being called into question, and the *Otago Daily Times* devoted an editorial to the debate instigated by the Roger Award.

In allowing other civil society groups and members of the public to submit nominations, the Roger Award empowered others in their own battles with transnational corporations and allowed CAFCA to deepen its own relationships within civil society. In this sense, CAFCA provided a "space" for oppositional politics to be conducted in an otherwise difficult period dominated by pro-market ideologies.

68. Considerations for literature

While the literature recognises the role of transnational political associations, Jackie Smith (2001) and Debra Minkoff (2001) highlight how the contribution of political CSOs to civil society at the national level is ignored. Using CAFCA as my example, I have demonstrated the wide range of contributions that can be made by political CSOs with a national focus, thereby addressing the lacuna in the literature identified by Smith and Minkoff.

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I agree with Smith that such organisations can act as causal variables in civil societies. By tracking ideas and information through civil society one can gain clues as to how such organisations can make their impact felt. These are relevant matters for the discipline of international business because civil society represents the environment in which international business operates. It is hard to think of what kind of organisation, other than a nationally focused CSO, could have forced greater transparency from both the government and corporate sector the way CAFCA has done, maintaining long campaigns against the political tides.

While this thesis adopted a single case study as the primary research strategy, in the course of this work I have also touched on the impact of other nationally focused CSOs in New Zealand. These include the Knights of Labour, Forest and Bird, Save Manapouri, Coalition for Open Government and the Campaign for Better Broadcasting.

The study of national political CSOs is likely to have been discouraged by the exaggerated claims made on behalf of globalisation, and the subsequent reinforcement of the idea that nationally based actors and institutions were on their way out. Yet if the world is not quite as global as the globalists suggest, then theories of civil society must also acknowledge the role of nationally focused CSOs.

While Hirst et al. (2009) do believe internationalisation has created constraints on certain types of national economic strategy, they maintain these claims have been exaggerated, which means that the extent to which national economic strategies may be constrained has also been exaggerated. They also highlight how evidence for more cautious arguments is used to bolster the strong version of the globalisation thesis, thereby confusing public discussion and policy making, and helping to reinforce the view that political actors can accomplish less than is actually possible in a global system (Hirst et al., 2009, p. 17).

In itself, the lifetime of CAFCA helps illustrate these points. If national economies had been as autonomous as the globalists seem to claim they were prior to the neo-liberal era, there would have been no need for William Ball Sutch (1966) and Wolfgang Rosenberg (1968) to advocate for New Zealand to maintain and extend its economic independence from the standpoint of the 1960s, and no need for CAFCA to have formed in 1975. By the same token, if a global economy existed today, or if the global economy had reached a significantly deeper level of integration than ever before, one would expect an organisation like CAFCA to have dwindled away, particularly as it has operated in a New Zealand political environment dominated by

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neoliberalism. In a small way, the long term survival of CAFCA challenges the exaggerated claims made by the globalists for both the past and the present.

In contrast, if Wade (1996) is right and the nation state remains an important locus of accumulation, with national actors and institutions continuing to play a dominant role in structuring economic space, this creates a space for CAFCA-type bodies and the promotion of nationally focused economic strategies. By painting a more realistic picture of the relationship between nation states and the global economy, this can provide a starting point for an explanation of why CAFCA survived as an organisation despite the political strength of neoliberal forces and the climate of ideological closure. It also suggests that CSOs with a national focus could play an important role in the formation and amplification of a ‘national voice’.

It also could be argued that the views of globalists, in particular concerning the scope of state action, are no longer as relevant given the significant state interventions taken in response to the 2008 financial crisis and the 2019-20 coronavirus pandemic. Wade (2010) and Dani Rodick (2008) describe how the Washington/Globalisation Consensus is now in a weakened state, as the financial crisis “left behind sufficient doubts about factual propositions and value priorities that political parties and economists advocating alternatives will have more scope than they have had for the past three decades” (Wade, 2009). Economic historians such as Les Oxley are already questioning whether Covid-19 marks the end of globalisation as we know it (Nippert, 2020). In May 2020 New Zealand cabinet paper warned that “even as borders re-open, we can anticipate a less open world for the foreseeable future” (Cabinet External Relations and Security Committee, 2020). While the future remains uncertain, CAFCA provide intellectual links to New Zealand-centric economic models which describe less open worlds, such as those advocated by Sutch, Lewin and Wolfgang Rosenberg.

In Chapter 3, I note how a detailed qualitative case study can provide opportunities for theory-generation, as theoretically useful cases can replicate or extend theory by filling conceptual categories (Eisenhardt, 1989). CAFCA provide an excellent example of how a CSO can play a role in civil society by acting as a journal of record. It is likely that the factors of success, as discussed above, can be utilised to consider the operations of similar organisations. I believe this represents the most significant theoretical contribution of this thesis.

69. Matters arising

There is a view that CAFCA are unlikely to continue past Murray's role as an organiser. Despite attempts to broaden and increase the size of the CAFCA committee since Bill's move to Wellington in 2009, no obvious successor to Murray has emerged. The combined energy, skills and dedication of CAFCA's core activists represent a very special and contingent combination that were always going to be difficult to replace. The end of the Roger Award and lower levels of media activity over the past five years also strengthen the impression that CAFCA may be beginning to wind down. However as I have discussed above, CAFCA have survived through previous periods of 'quiet' activity to rebound with more energy in response to political circumstances or the opportunity to release pertinent information into the public domain.

If CAFCINZ had begun in the internet age, it is possible that some of CAFCA's material, such as the analysis of the OIC decisions, could have taken the form of a weblog or a database instead of forming part of a printed magazine. While the large number of *Watchdog* articles cited in this thesis indicates its value as a historical resource, CAFCA may wish to consider ways in which to make *Watchdog* as an archive more accessible. This would allow CAFCA to continue to act as a journal of record even in the case where CAFCA winds down as an organisation in its own right. One suggestion would be a new website where articles are tagged by subject and include metadata to improve the accuracy of citations and allow 'crawler' software such as Google Scholar to identify individual pages. A more precise search function would be helpful too.

70. Future research

This thesis raises a number of questions in regard to the operation of CSOs in the New Zealand public sphere. Some relate to the nature of leadership. Are political CSOs in a small society like New Zealand more likely to be driven by a fewer number of people than elsewhere? This often leads to situations where such individuals are seen to dominate organisations, in a combination of force of personality, competence and devotion to a cause. The environment in which such CSOs operate is also another vital factor.

There is also scope for further research examining whether the existing research operations of CSOs, unions and other community groups may take the form of a journal of record. While some work may aim to be public, like CAFCA's summaries of the OIO material, others may create journals of record for their own internal use, as a means of supporting campaigns and

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other operations. Reflecting on my 11 years working as a researcher for a trade union, I note some of my work such as ‘company profiles’ acted in a similar fashion to a journal of record. There is space for further work examining the role of organisations like CAFCA in promoting ideas associated with ‘heterodox’ approaches to economics and other challenges to the Washington Consensus. In Chapter 4, I highlighted an economic tradition in New Zealand that challenged the assumptions of neoclassicism (Easton, 1975). In its own empirical, untheorised way CAFCA continued that tradition by keeping an alternative view of the economy alive. While most of this focused on challenging the prevailing assumptions of neoliberalism, the influence of heterodox approaches to economics can also be detected. Taking their inspiration from Sutch, CAFCA may be one of the most significant recent organisations in New Zealand to be influenced by institutional economics. In targeting their humour towards the rich and the powerful, CAFCA also carry some of the spirit of Veblen, the founder of institutionalism. Though the involvement of Wolfgang Rosenberg and their own reading, CAFCA are also likely to have gained knowledge of the post-Keynesian, Marxian and developmental schools.

In defending the right of nation states to define their own future, CAFCA also introduced the views of the globalisation ‘sceptics’ to a wider audience, most notably in New Zealand. As noted in Chapter 4, the presence of CAFCA is likely to have made Christchurch the centre of debates over the merits of progressive nationalism, building on the ‘cultural nationalist’ heritage in the city. These points raise important questions as to the role of theoretical debates among ‘organic’ intellectuals and the academic/activist ‘divide’.

In ‘Bloomsbury South’ Simpson (2016) reports the Christchurch based intellectual and artistic movement effectively dispersed by 1953, though some remnants remained. Not only do CAFCA represent a continuation of left wing publishing in Christchurch, they have links to Bloomsbury South through Winston T. Rhodes, who founded *Monthly Review*, and Wolfgang’s contributions to *Landfall*. The emergence of another generation of left wing intellectuals in Christchurch in the late 1960s and 1970s could suggest some of the factors that germinated the development of Bloomsbury South were still present, however it is also interesting the dispersal of many of these individuals to Auckland and Wellington, seemed to happen in a similar fashion as it did in the late 1940s and early 1950s.

While this PhD has focused on the potential origins of a left wing intellectual tradition in Christchurch, there is likely to be scope for study of free market or conservative currents, perhaps building on the work of Endres (1991). The historic success of social democratic parties

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in the city suggests the left wing tradition may have had more influence, at least in Christchurch. There is likely to be links between such intellectual traditions and other cultural forms such as satirical political comedy – it is notable that McPhail and Gadsby began their career with a ‘Week of It’ based in Christchurch. It would be interesting to see to what extent the loss of local radio and television production to the North Island during the 1990s negatively impacted the intellectual culture that underpinned it.

While it should be acknowledged that Lewin and Sutch are products of the Wellington region and Sinclair⁴⁷ can be claimed by Auckland, it could still be argued that Christchurch has produced a greater number of the thinkers who have advocated for New Zealand to gain greater independence. In this sense, writers like Owen Wilkes, Murray Horton, Bill Rosenberg, Bruce Jesson, Elsie Locke, Keith Locke and Marie Leadbeater are the intellectual children of Reeves. There is also scope for further study of the intellectual components of the Christchurch peace movement, perhaps building on the historical work of Locke (1992) and Leadbeater (2013). This could examine the impact of the intellectuals mentioned above, as well as notable emigrants such as Bob Leonard and Larry Ross. As noted in the introduction, there is also scope for study of CAFCA, the nature of imperialism and the relationship between this and the autonomy of nation states.

I suggest the intellectual space occupied by CAFCA can be traced to the thought of William Pember Reeves. Reeves had a significant influence on historiography in New Zealand. Erik Olssen (1992, p. 75) characterises the core principles of this Reevesian paradigm as ‘Englishness, an adventuresome and democratic people, the social laboratory and harmonious race relations’. He attributes an updated version to Keith Sinclair (1959), who emphasised the importance of race relations and tracked the development of the welfare state. While Pat Maloney and Kerry Taylor (2002, p. 12) describe this paradigm as “remarkably resilient”, other historians, following Gibbons (2002) have questioned whether the nation is the appropriate focus for New Zealand histories.

Perhaps a reason for CAFCA being accepted as a journal of record is partly due to its compatibility with aspects of the Reeves-Sinclair paradigm, although the idea of New Zealand or Christchurch aiming to be ‘more English than England’ has been in decline since the 1950s (Rice, 2008, p. 119), and would be opposed by CAFCA in favour of a more stringent nationalism of place. While this thesis has been predicated on a view of the post Westphalian nation state,

⁴⁷ Sinclair wrote a notable biography, William Pember Reeves: New Zealand Fabian (1965).

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there would be scope for future work that considered CAFCA alongside the debates regarding the role of supernational bodies and the challenge raised by tino rangatiratanga.

While this thesis has concentrated on the role played by national CSOs in the Comalco debate, the revelations contained in the Wikileaks material also demonstrates scope for further work with a greater focus on the various sets of negotiations between the New Zealand government and the company. There are likely to be more records released relating to this relationship over time.

As I complete this PhD at the beginning of the Covid age, the scale of government actions taken in response to the pandemic are likely to lead to further reassessments as to the role of the state in the economy. National borders have also gained greater prominence. While the future is unlikely to resemble the past in many respects, I hope my discussion of civil society and globalisation in the New Zealand context, with CAFCA as my lens, can contribute to these discussions. Debates concerning globalisation and the role of the state have not, and will not, always move in the same direction. In the context of a weakening Washington Consensus, we could ask how a Reeves, a Sutch or a Jesson could define New Zealand's interests in a modern context. Nurturing a healthy left wing intellectual culture in New Zealand can provide the inspiration for the alternatives to emerge.

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