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1942, the Pacific War, and the Defence of New Zealand

**A thesis presented in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of
Master of Philosophy
in
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Peter C. Wilkins

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The author Peter Cyril Wilkins reserves the moral right to be identified as the author of this work.

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ABSTRACT

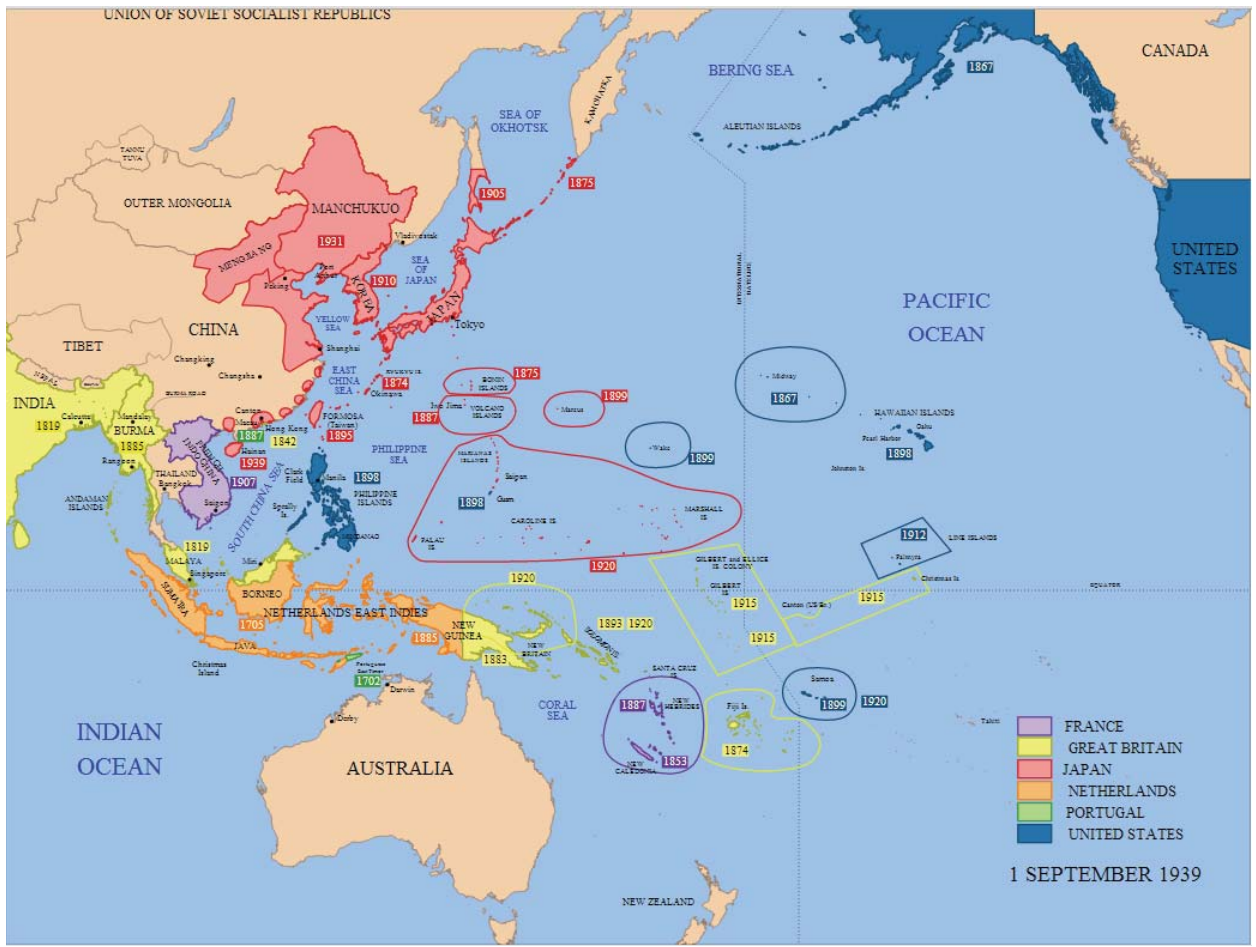
During 1941-1942 New Zealand expended vast amounts of capital and labour building in-depth defences against the perceived invasion threat from Japan that today is often regarded, especially by academic historians, as non-existent. This thesis looks closely at the background of such a Japanese threat and the subsequent realities. It examines the failures of the existing, indeed traditional political alliance with the British 'family of nations' and its associated myths against the *Realpolitik* of New Zealand's enforced absorption into the new American power block. The origins of today's opinions are teased out to examine their realities and the drivers of the New Zealand government's actions at the time are reviewed. These actions along with the experience, perceptions and, above all, the circumstantial knowledge that formed the opinions drove the decisions to act are established. The conclusion of this thesis is the threat to New Zealand of being raided, isolated, even possibly invaded, was geopolitically and militarily real at the time. The margins by which any of these possibilities were avoided were narrow.

ABBREVIATIONS AND CODE NAMES

AA	Anti-Aircraft (US=AAA - Anti-Aircraft Artillery)
ABDA	American-British-Dutch-Australian (Command)
AFV	Armoured Fighting Vehicle
Americal	Americans in New Caledonia, used also for US Army Americal Division (later 23rd Infantry Division)
ANZAC	<i>Originally</i> Australian and New Zealand Army Corps (ANZAC used to describe Tasman Sea defence area early in 1942)
AWM	Australian War Memorial
BBC	British Broadcasting Corporation
CAST	USN Radio Intercept Station based at Corregidor, Manila Harbour
CID	Chief(s) of Imperial Defence (UK)
CINCPAC	Commander in Chief, Pacific Area Command
COMINCH	Commander in Chief (USN)
COMINT	Communications Intelligence
COMSOPAC	Commander South Pacific (USN)
COS	Chief(s) of Staff
EPS	Emergency Precautions Scheme (NZ)
FDR	Franklin Delano Roosevelt, 32 nd President of the USA
FE	Far East (UK definition)
FECB	Far East Combined Bureau (UK)
FRUMMEL	USN Radio Interception Station Melbourne, Australia
<i>Gaimusho</i>	Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs
GC&CS	Government Code & Cypher School (UK)
<i>Gekokujo</i>	Japan's concept of manipulation of superiors by subordinates

GRU	<i>Glavnoje Razvedyvatelnaje Upravelenije</i> (Main Intelligence Directorife (USSR)
Gunreibu	Imperial Japanese Navy General Staff
HMS	His/Her Majesty's Ship (RN)
HUFDUFF	High Frequency Radio Direction Finding (UK)
HUMINT	Human Intelligence
HYPO	USN Radio Interception Station, Hawaii
IJA	Imperial Japanese Army
IJN	Imperial Japanese Navy
IMTFE	International Military Tribunal Far East
KGB	<i>Komitet Gosudarstvennoy Bezoposnosti</i> (Committee for State Security) (USSR)
NEI	Netherland East Indies
NSO	National Security Organisation (NZ)
NZ	New Zealand
NZEF	New Zealand Expeditionary Force (2NZEF to Middle East, 3NZEF to Pacific)
NZPD	New Zealand Parliamentary Debates
ONI	Office of Naval Intelligence (USA)
Operation MO	Japanese code for landing at Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea
Operation SR	Japanese code for landing at Lae-Salamaua, Papua New Guinea
OSS	Office of Strategic Services (USA)
PM	Prime Minister
RAF	Royal Air Force (UK)
RAN	Royal Australian Navy
RMS	Royal Mail Ship (UK)
RN	Royal Navy (UK)
RNZAF	Royal New Zealand Air Force

SEA	South-East Asia (UK definition)
<i>Shenskobyō</i>	Victory disease (a Japanese term meaning hubris from successes)
SIGINT	Signals Intelligence
SIS	Security Intelligence Service
SOE	Special Operations Executive (UK)
SPA	South Pacific Area (also SP)
SS	Steam Ship
SSDA	Secretary of State for Dominion Affairs, Foreign Office (UK)
SWPA	South-West (or Southwest) Pacific Area (Australian and US)
UK	United Kingdom (of Great Britain)
US	United States
USA	United States of America
USAAF	United States Army Air Forces
USMC	United States Marine Corps
USN	United States Navy
WWII	World War II (also WW2)



Map 1: The Political Map of the Pacific - 1939

[Wiki/History of Oceania#/media/File: Pacific Area – The Imperial Powers 1939 - Map.svg](#)