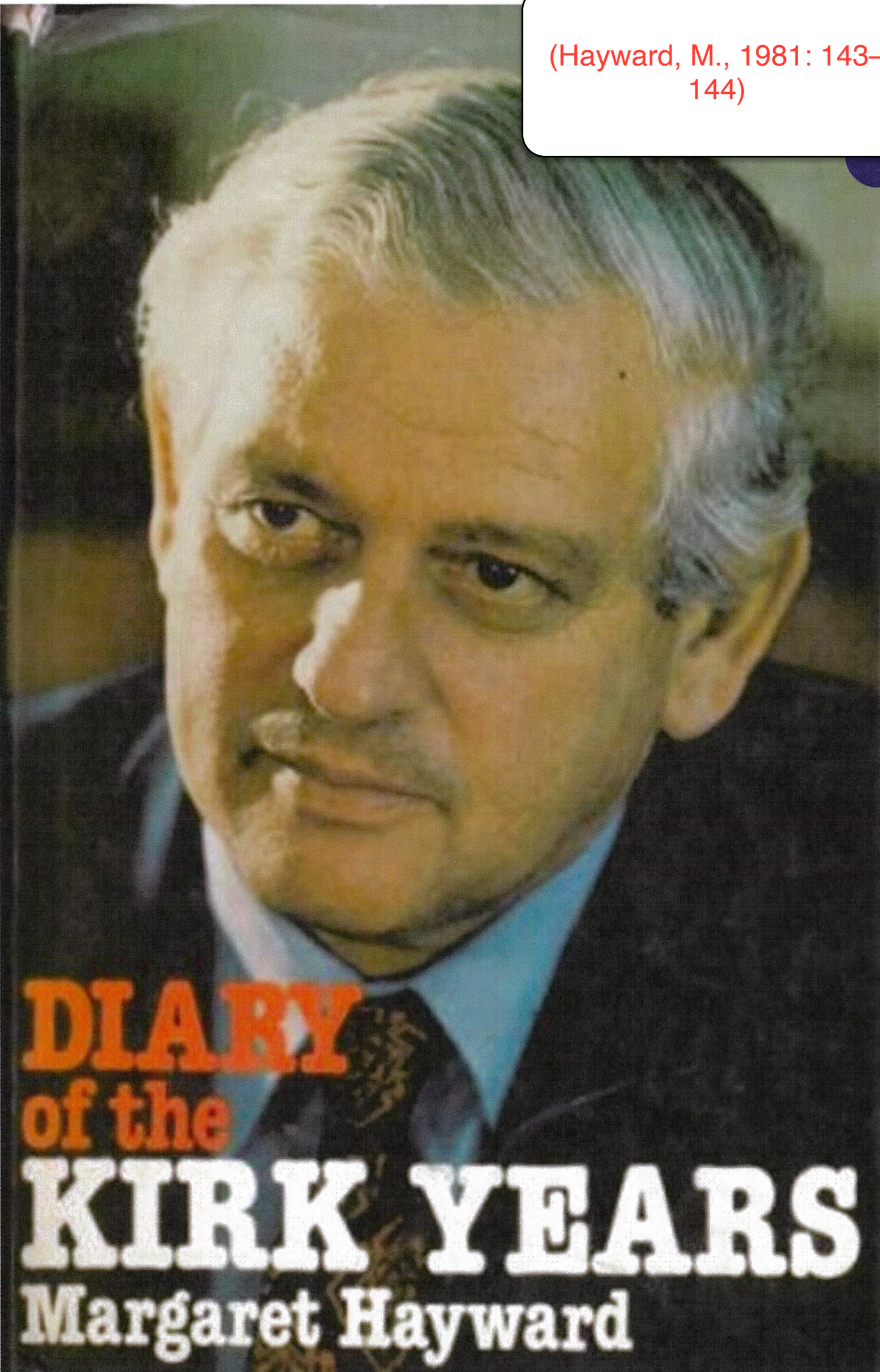


(Hayward, M., 1981: 143–
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DIARY
of the
KIRK YEARS
Margaret Hayward

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Otago will be the stand-by frigate at Mururoa until 8 July when the navy's more modern *Canterbury* will take over. He confirms that the *Otago* will have a Cabinet Minister on board.

New Zealand trade unions are to boycott French shipping, aircraft and goods from midnight tomorrow, following instructions from the International Conference of Free Trade Unions in Geneva.

This evening Mr K again visited Bob Scott's home as Bob has been stung into action by Mr K's comments about Bishop Paul Reeves - "He may do well, but will he do good?" - and Reeves' remarks about Mr K in similar vein. Bob is determined to bring them together.

I'm sure one of the reasons Mr K accepted Bob's invitation is that he is looking for a prominent churchman to make an issue of social problems, so his Cabinet Ministers become more aware of people's problems, do something about them, and are seen to be doing something about them.

Bob also invited me but I declined. Afterwards Mr K phoned to say it was a pleasant evening but the Bishop was not the Messiah he was looking for.

Saturday, 23 June. Mr K was attending the opening of the New Zealand Marching Association conference when the news came through that the International Court of Justice had voted, eight to six, in favour of an interim injunction against the French nuclear testing in the South Pacific. The Court noted that the French Government was not represented at the hearings but stated this was not an obstacle to their judgment.

Now Mr K has issued a statement, saying that this decision "may come to be seen as a turning point in the history of the international community's efforts to eliminate nuclear testing that creates health and environmental hazards".

At his request, Foreign Affairs send out more than 100 cables to heads of government of all member states and observer states of the United Nations, and of countries in the Pacific region not members of the United Nations, urging them to "lend all possible support to our action, through public statements, diplomatic pressure and other appropriate ways, to prevent the resumption of these tests . . ."

He also writes to President Pompidou, urging him to reconsider France's position. He says he is well aware that it would be a weighty decision for the French Government. World opinion, however, would acclaim it as a reflection of France's tradition of respect for the rule of law in international affairs.

Journalists speculate that the first explosion at Mururoa could take place next week as France intends to ignore the Court's ruling. Mr K phones Gough Whitlam and then announces: "HMNZS *Otago* will sail towards the French test area at Mururoa on the earliest possible date, 28 June. The Australian Government has been invited to despatch the support vessel, HMAS *Supply*, to rendezvous with the *Otago*." He makes it clear that the *Otago* will not be a mother ship to protest boats, which sailed without Government support or encouragement.

"The Government is fully conscious that the Court has not only ordered France to refrain from carrying out any further tests in the atmosphere while the case is before the Court, but has also ordered each party to take no action of any further kind which might aggravate or extend the dispute or prejudice the rights of the other.

"The despatch of a frigate with the objective I have outlined cannot be so regarded. On the contrary, we hope that by mobilising world opinion it will help to persuade France to comply with the Court's order, and to refrain from aggravating the dispute and prejudicing New Zealand's rights by commencing its test programme."

He speaks quietly and his appearance on TV is low-key. A Cabinet Minister will be on board but he doesn't know if he will be the one, because it could be a long vigil

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and he can't be away from New Zealand for too long. "Otherwise I'd go like a shot."

Monday, 25 June. With Mr K at his press conference after Cabinet today are Minister of Defence Arthur Faulkner — and Fraser Colman. Mr K announces Fraser will be representing the Government aboard the frigate. "We all wanted to go, and 20 names were put in the hat." Fraser Colman's name was drawn.

Mr Marshall has refused the invitation to send an Opposition Member with Mr Colman, saying the National Party regarded the sending of a naval vessel into the test area as "at best a futile and empty gesture".

The French Government has reiterated that the International Court of Justice is not competent to rule on a matter concerning its "national defence".

In the world press New Zealand is already being likened to a David tilting at a Goliath. Peru, Chile and Ecuador have issued a joint statement denouncing the tests as "contrary to the principle, resolution and objectives of the United Nations". And it's reported that thousands of Tahitians joined in the largest-ever demonstration in Papeete yesterday, carrying placards with signs like "Radiation Today, Death Tomorrow". Mururoa is only 800 miles away from Tahiti.

Meanwhile Mr K is denying that it is an exercise in gunboat diplomacy. "What we aim to do is publicise what is happening in this remote part of the world, so as to stimulate world opinion and attract support for the rights of smaller nations."

Thursday, 28 June. Mr and Mrs Kirk attended a Wainuiomata Lions' Club function in Fraser Colman's electorate on Monday. Mrs Kirk told me the Lions dressed Fraser up in a tin hat, gave him a paddle and a fishing line, and teased him all evening.

Candidates for the voyage include Members of Parliament from Britain, Canada and Australia — Dr Jim Cairns, Australian Minister for Overseas Trade — and a Japanese organisation wanting to send two disabled victims of Hiroshima. No one has been accepted as the frigate will be manned entirely by New Zealand Navy volunteers.

On Tuesday I flew with Mr and Mrs Kirk to Tauranga, to the Dominion conference of the Women's Division of Federated Farmers. Mr K, saying the notes prepared for him were "just puff — no meat in them", gave his address off the cuff.

He talked about some of the problems faced by women in the home and the solutions that would have to be found, probably by women themselves. After equal pay the next serious question to be considered was economic justice for the housewife. Women who helped perpetuate society and provided its emotional stability must not be disadvantaged financially, he said, and touched on a motherhood endowment suggestion raised at a Labour women's conference.

We flew on to Napier yesterday for the opening of the multi-million dollar Whiranaki computerised paper mill, established by a joint venture of Japanese and New Zealand interests, the Carter Consortium and the Oji Paper Company.

We were an hour late, partly because Mr K had earlier spent far too much time inspecting Tauranga College and because he'd asked if the pilot could detour to fly over smoking White Island so passengers could peer into its volcanic depths.

Mr K noticed a little Japanese girl in traditional kimono, the daughter of the chief engineer, and asked her to help him with the opening ceremony. To mark the occasion he was presented with a magnificent ceremonial Japanese warrior's helmet.

It was late when we returned to Wellington, but the real work was just beginning. At the office we worked till 1 a.m. on the speech to farewell HMNZS *Otago* today, while Murray Goston stayed on duty in the press office for any further messages.

Mr K was determined it would be a good speech. He has had enough of poor speech

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