
The Unintended Consequences of Fiji's International Peacekeeping

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The consequences of international peacekeeping operations on the domestic politics of a contributing country are an under-explored phenomenon. For Fiji, the intended outcome was that the fledgling state would play a positive role in international affairs. The unintended outcome was the development of a patron-client nexus between the ruling elite and the largely ethnic Fijian military. In the last twenty five years the military has intervened in domestic affairs, which has made Fiji a coup-prone state. This article considers why this has occurred.

By one account Fiji has taken part in more peacekeeping operations than any other nation in the world.¹ This article examines the influence of international peacekeeping operations on the domestic politics of the country from which peacekeepers are drawn. How has participation in United Nations (UN) peacekeeping missions influenced military intervention in politics? In Fiji's case, it is argued that experience in peacekeeping operations has influenced the Republic of Fiji Military Forces' (RFMF) self image as a mediator of political tensions and executor of coups d'état. This has correspondingly led to the militarisation of the government by a largely ethnic Fijian military.

Independence and Fiji as a 'Good International Citizen'

Fiji's transition to Independence was peacefully negotiated and not the outcome of a de-colonisation conflict. Apart from the Viti Levu highlands pacification campaigns and the suppression of strike action against Indigenous and Indo-Fijians during colonial times, the military was historically apolitical. Unlike the Indonesian military, the Fijian military's *raison d'être* was not determined by external or internal security threats. This raises the question as to how the RFMF developed an interventionist role akin to the Indonesian or Thai militaries, which always regarded themselves as political organisations. It is argued that the ideology of political intervention that now pervades the Fijian military's senior command is an unintended consequence of the military's experience in peacekeeping.

In 1978, Fijian troops were deployed to the United Nations Interim Forces in Lebanon (UNIFIL). UNIFIL's mandate, as stipulated in UN Security Council resolution 425, called for the protection of the people of Southern Lebanon

¹ Andrew Roberts, *A History of the English-speaking Peoples Since 1900* (London: Widenfeld and Nicolson, 2006), p. 644.

from the Israeli Defence Force (IDF) and various armed elements such as the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO), Afwaj Al-Mugamah Al-Lubnaniyya (AMAL) and more recently, Hezbollah. The 1st Battalion Fiji Infantry Regiment was raised with a mix of soldiers from the military's territorial and regular forces. The unit, which had distinguished itself in the Solomon Islands and the Malayan insurgency campaign, was again overseas bound, only this time for peacekeeping. Firth states that this decision "still reverberates in the political life of Fiji, though in this case the consequences could not have been foreseen".² The intended outcome of this commitment for the new nation was recognition as a "good international citizen", foreign exchange earnings and employment for youths.

However, the policy of the indigenous Fijian elite Alliance Government to commit troops was not debated in parliament.³ Fiji's first Prime Minister, Ratu Mara, who was also responsible for Foreign Affairs, along with the Minister of Home Affairs, Ratu Penaia Ganilau, a Malayan campaign battalion commander, were instrumental in the decision to commit to UN peacekeeping. Indeed, a secret assessment of Mara by Australia's High Commissioner in Suva revealed that: "[Mara] is prone to make decisions without reference to Cabinet or to bludgeon Cabinet into accepting his viewpoint".⁴

Two of Ganilau's junior officers, Mosese Buadromo and Paul Manueli, were Permanent Secretary of Home Affairs and Commander of the military respectively. The patron-client relationship that developed between the Alliance Government and the predominantly indigenous military, based on indigenous political paramountcy, underpinned this monumental foreign policy decision. Jim Sanday has contextualised the patron-client nexus as the chief-warrior (*Turaga-bati*) relationship and stressed that the Fijian military's professionalism differed from the classical professionalism of the British military.⁵ Since its first peacekeeping deployment in 1978, the military's peacekeeping role has been controversial, as it has unintentionally aided political instability in Fiji. It can be deduced that the confidence the RFMF gained from serving with larger nations' militaries in international peacekeeping missions has given it an inflated corporate self image.

In addition, the Fijian Government's agreement to provide a light battalion of 500 soldiers to UNIFIL necessitated that the military forces increase in size from 800 to 1300 in 1978. It was initially intended that Fijian soldiers would stay in Lebanon for a year or so, but they ended up staying for more than

² Stewart Firth, 'Fiji at Forty', Roundtable Paper, Australian National University, 8 October 2010.

³ National Federation Party (NFP) Opposition Leader Jai Ram Reddy assertion to Prof Brij Lal as revealed to author, 23 November 2009.

⁴ H.W. Bullock, Despatch no. 2/75(8 August), National Archives of Australia, A 1838.

⁵ Jim Sanday, 'The Politicization of Military Professionalism in Fiji', in Viberto Selochan (ed.), *The Military, the State, and Development in Asia and the Pacific* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1991), pp. 126-7.

two decades, not withdrawing until 2002. The pressure on the RFMF to sustain such a huge commitment was exacerbated in 1982 by an additional 500 man deployment as part of the US sponsored Multinational Forces Observers in Egypt. The RFMF was also called upon to participate in other peacekeeping missions with smaller numbers in Somalia, Cambodia, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Kuwait, Sudan and Iraq. When armed conflict broke out closer to home in Papua New Guinea, the Solomon Islands and Timor-Leste, Fiji peacekeepers joined mainly regional forces to enforce and monitor peace agreements. Firth argues that:

The principal consequence of this worldwide and regional soldiering by Fijians was to inflate the size of the RFMF far beyond what was needed to defend the territory of Fiji itself.⁶

In addition, to meet the requirements of multiple missions, the RFMF increased the recommended UN six month tour of duty to one year for Fijian peacekeepers. Even this extension was not enough to ease the pressure of sustaining the two Middle East battalions for peacekeeping; hence the majority of Fijian peacekeepers served multiple tours. This placed enormous family and social pressure on Fijian peacekeepers.

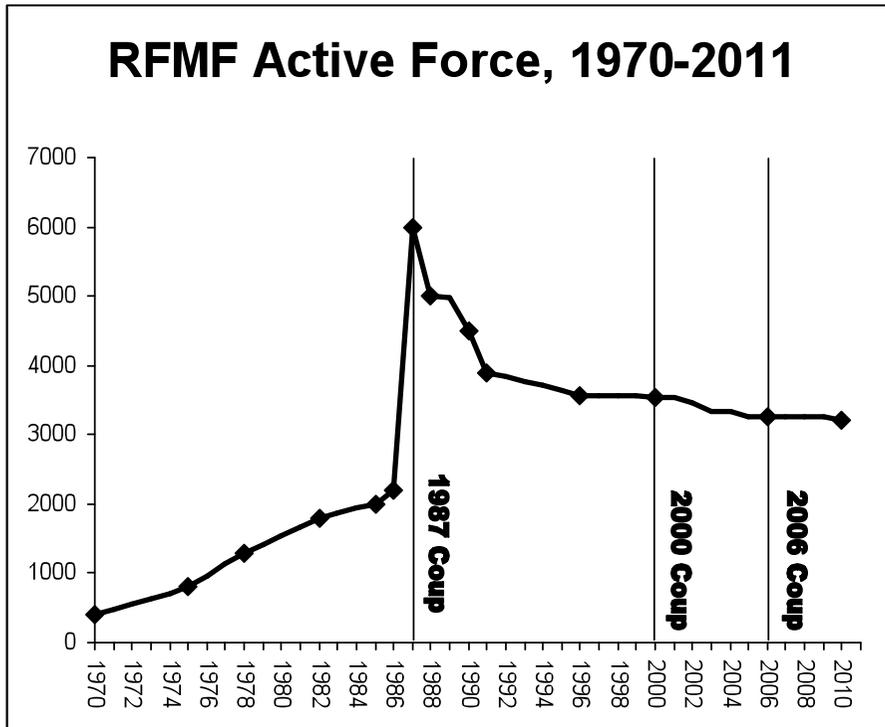
With the government's emphasis on nation-building post-Independence, the RFMF was given a lead role, as it was allocated responsibility for maritime surveillance and for implementing the Alliance Government's national development goals in rural areas. Accordingly, the RFMF was given the following roles: 1) Defence of the nation; 2) Rural Development; 3) Protection of Economic Exclusive Zone; and 4) International Peacekeeping.⁷ This necessitated the formation of the RFMF's Naval Division and Rural Development Units in 1975, which saw regular force numbers increase from 400 to 800.⁸ As a result, although the RFMF was a tiny force of 200 at independence, it had grown by more than ten times that amount by the time the first coup took place in 1987 (see Figure 1). Consequently, non-core roles became the force determinant for the RFMF, and encouraged its intervention in politics.

⁶ Firth, 'Fiji at Forty'.

⁷ Republic of Fiji Military Forces, <<http://www.rfmf.mil.fj/>> [Accessed 10 October 2012].

⁸ Parliament of Fiji, *Defending Fiji: Defence White Paper 1997* (Suva: Government Printer, 1997), p. 96.

Figure 1: Size of the Republic of Fiji Military Forces, 1970-2011



Source: Parliament of Fiji, *Defending Fiji: Defence White Paper 1997* (Suva: Government Printer, 1997); Government of Fiji, *National Security White Paper 2005* (Suva: Government Printer, 2005).

For its population size, Fiji's military is quite large in comparison to its bigger neighbours: Australia, New Zealand and Papua New Guinea. Instead, its size is comparable to coup-prone countries in the Asian region: Myanmar, Thailand, Pakistan and Nepal (see Table 1). After peacekeeping deployments to Lebanon and Egypt, the further expansion of the military came as a direct result of the 1987 coup. To control the emergency situation, which critics argued had been created by the military in the first place, the military formed new infantry battalions overnight using reservists through recruitment drives. An elite Counter-Revolutionary Warfare unit was also formed to protect against potential anti-government armed insurgency. Ironically, as a consequence of executing an indigenous supremacist coup, the military appropriated a permanent internal security role. Moreover, the military's role in defence of the nation came to mean internal, rather than external, security after the 1987 coup. The formation of the Counter-

Revolutionary Warfare unit emphasised this new military, and indeed political, role in internal security.

Table 1: Comparison by Country of Number of Military Personnel Relative to Population Size

Country	Soldiers/1000 capita	Country	Soldiers/1000 capita
Fiji	10.1	Myanmar	10.7
Australia	3.9	Thailand	10.1
New Zealand	2.8	Pakistan	8.2
Papua New Guinea	0.5	Nepal	5.5

Note: Fiji—total military personnel 9500 (active and reserves) to 837,000 population.

Source: International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS), *The Military Balance 2010* (London: Routledge, 2010)

Given the patronage of the ruling indigenous elite, since independence Fiji's military can be said to have become a parallel state within a state. Its annual budget has consistently been overspent with impunity, and its influence over the office of the President has been dominant.⁹ Moreover, recruitment has heavily favoured indigenous Fijians. The huge ethnic disparity was put down to the unappealing nature of soldiering to Indo-Fijians. However, this heavily skewed ethnic recruitment has only reinforced a tacit belief within the institution that it is the bastion of indigenous political paramountcy. Ironically, though the 2006 coup was aimed at wiping out racial discrimination, including preferential treatment for indigenous Fijians, the military still remains 99 per cent indigenous Fijians.

By making peacekeeping the centrepiece of foreign policy, Fijian governments have unwittingly spawned political instability, as the military's capability to intervene in domestic politics has become increasingly facilitated by the fact that its numbers have swelled due to overseas peacekeeping commitments.

Lebanon Battleground of the Middle East

Peacekeeping in Lebanon shaped the outlook of the RFMF as an institution. As David Hirst has aptly stated, "Lebanon ... was almost designed to be the everlasting battleground for others' political, strategic and ideological conflicts".¹⁰ Indeed, not for nothing has the term *libanisation* ('Lebanonisation') become a part of the French language, defined in the

⁹ Dr Wadan Narsey, 'The 2011 Budget Oscars: Burdening Future Generations (2010) (blogs)', 18 March 2012, <<http://narseyonfiji.wordpress.com/2012/03/18/the-2011-budget-oscars-burdening-future-generations-2010-blogs/>> [Accessed 25 August 2012].

¹⁰ David Hirst, *Beware of Small States: Lebanon, Battleground of the Middle East* (New York: Nation Books, 2010), p. 3.

latest edition of *Larousse* as “a process of fragmentation of a state, as a result of confrontation between diverse communities”.¹¹

Fijian soldiers have been indelibly affected by the mediator role they performed when trying to defuse communal factional conflicts as part of peacekeeping in Lebanon. Firth has argued that:

Service abroad also accustomed Fijian military officers to the role played by military forces in imposing order, and gave them an understanding of military intervention in civil affairs in other parts of the world. Participation in peacekeeping not only necessitated a much larger Fiji military, it also required a more sophisticated one, whose officers were in a position to work effectively with UN officials, local politicians and other defence forces.¹²

Indeed, there is little doubt that in the RFMF there is a higher premium placed on the diplomatic, humanitarian and negotiating skills of soldiers than on fighting ability.¹³

The tragic Qana massacre of Lebanese civilians inside a Fijian UN position during the IDF Operation *Grapes of Wrath* in 1996 illustrates the point. Unlike the Srebrenica massacre, where Dutch peacekeepers bowed to pressure not to shelter Bosnian refugees, Fijians opened their headquarters to fleeing civilians during heavy Israeli shelling of Southern Lebanon. For the Lebanese, the Qana massacre became the tragic symbol of “national unity” restored, assisted by the humanitarian spirit of the UN’s Fijian peacekeepers.¹⁴ Indeed, the humanitarian face of peacekeeping displayed by Fijian soldiers in this tragic event gave rise to the perception within the RFMF that the military has a role in human security.¹⁵

Fijian troops serving with the UN have gained a reputation as “no nonsense” peacekeepers. As they hail from a small South Pacific nation, relatively isolated from partisan global politics, this has reinforced their impartial image, which is vital to international peacekeeping. An incident in 1988 illustrates this: a Fijian soldier from the UN peacekeeping force in southern Lebanon was wounded in a shootout with Shiite Moslem militiamen. According to UN sources:

The peacekeeper was shot in the chest during a 20-minute fire-fight with six gunmen of the Syrian-backed Amal militia in Ein Baal, six miles southeast of the southern port city of Tyre. The sources said the shooting broke out when soldiers manning a Fijian checkpoint in Ein Baal tried to prevent the militiamen from driving their green Volvo station wagon into U.N.-policed territory with their arms. “When the Fijian checkpoint told them they cannot

¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 2.

¹² Firth, ‘Fiji at Forty’.

¹³ Ramesh Thakur, ‘Mini State and Macro Cooperation: Fiji’s Peacekeeping Debut in Lebanon’, *Review of International Studies*, vol. 10, no. 4 (October 1984), p. 276.

¹⁴ Hirst, *Beware of Small States*, p. 259.

¹⁵ National Council for Building a Better Fiji, *Peoples Charter for Change, Peace and Progress*, 15 December 2008, p.15.

cross, they headed for a dirt road. A Fijian soldier fired a warning shot in the air," one source said. "The armed elements apparently thought they were under fire, so they shot back and a firefight ensued in which one armed element also was slightly wounded."¹⁶

Fijian soldiers on peacekeeping duties in the volatile Middle East have thus been praised for their restraint and humanitarian qualities. These encounters have indelibly shaped the mediator self-image of military officers, many of whom are now senior bureaucrats in the Bainimarama regime.

A UN documentary from the 1980s, *The Man in the Middle*, which featured Fijian soldiers, captured the dangerous and arduous role of peacekeepers and raised their international peacekeeping profile. The accompanying UN public relations abstract for the film epitomises the point being made that:

Since 1978 a small force of 6,000 United Nations soldiers has tried to keep the peace in southern Lebanon. This multinational peacekeeping force acts out its role as a buffer between the various factions. The United Nations interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) has not yet been able to fulfil entirely the mandate entrusted to it by the Security Council. However, by its presence, it maintains a semblance of peace and restricts armed conflict that might otherwise envelop the entire Middle East. The film tells the story of the effects of war on a land and its people.¹⁷

Arguably the Fiji military's domestic political role has been influenced by its initial UNIFIL and subsequent peacekeeping experiences, where the mediator role became engrained in the collective military psyche.

Unintended Consequences of UN Peacekeeping

Since the first UN peacekeeping mission in Kashmir in 1949 there has been a body of literature which stresses that participation in peace operations is beneficial for military institutions, as it is said to encourage them to adhere to international civil-military standards and civilian control. Recently a literature on the unintended consequences of UN peacekeeping on a nation and its military force has emerged, although its scope does not include the political dimension highlighted in this article.¹⁸

In 1989 a senior RFMF officer presented a paper to the President and interim Prime Minister on the perceived threats facing Fiji. In that paper a

¹⁶ 'Fijian Soldiers Wounded in Shootout', *Associated Press News*, 7 November 1988.

¹⁷ United Nations, *The Man in the Middle* (New York: Department of Public Information Audio/Visual Promotion and Distribution Unit, United Nations, 1982), <<http://peacemedia.usip.org/resource/man-middle>> [Accessed 10 October 2012].

¹⁸ Arturo C. Sotomayor, 'Unintended Consequences of Peace Operations for Troop-contributing Countries in South America: The Cases of Argentina and Uruguay', CSR Murthy, 'Unintended Consequences of Peace Operations for Troop-contributing Countries from South Asia', Kwesi Aning, 'Unintended Consequences of Peace Operations for Troop-contributing Countries from West Africa: The Case of Ghana', in Chiyuki Aoi, Cedric de Coning and Ramesh Thakur (eds), *Unintended Consequences of Peacekeeping Operations* (New York: United Nations University Press, 2007).

Middle Eastern scenario was envisaged for Fiji that was predicted to necessitate fifteen years of military rule.¹⁹ Similarly, current military regime leader Commodore Frank Bainimarama has objected to the use of “interim” for his government. According to regime defector and senior military officer Colonel Tevita Mara, Bainimarama has intimated his vision of fifty years of military rule, illustrating his confidence in his ability to govern, given the militarisation of many top government positions.

Deryk Scarr has argued that Fiji’s UN peacekeeping contributions have considerably raised the country’s international profile, but have not enhanced the military’s Westminster brand of professionalism.²⁰ It is argued that the expansion of the military’s political role since the first coup in 1987 was underpinned by participation in international peacekeeping missions, and that service with UNIFIL peacekeeping operations established the self-image of Fiji’s military elite as political mediators. By the time the battalion had pulled out in 2002, the mediator role forged in Lebanon became engrained in the collective military psyche and valorised by the deaths of thirty seven Fiji soldiers. That the involvement of Fijian troops in peacekeeping in the Middle East attracted much international attention also gave them a sense of self-belief in being part of a complex diplomatic solution of global proportions. Furthermore, being identified with other foreign soldiers engendered a wider sense of corporate identity in their profession.²¹ Officers who were central to the military’s role in coups, such as Rabuka in 1987, Filipo Tarakinikini in 2000 and Pita Driti in 2006, were all previous commanders of Fiji’s peacekeeping battalion in Lebanon.

Rabuka’s Coup

The adoption of a political mediator role by Rabuka in executing the 1987 coup seemed all too sudden, given the Fiji military’s much touted professionalism and apolitical role since Independence. Civil-military relations were transformed at the expense of the previous ‘civilian supremacy’ model, revealing the fragility of democracy post-Independence. What brought about the change in military mindset? It is argued that international peacekeeping, especially in the Middle East, imbued a confident ‘mediator’ disposition amongst Fiji’s military officers. The implication of a ‘Lebanon situation’ is quite obvious in Rabuka’s coup operational orders (OPORD 1/87). In the conclusion to the OPOD Rabuka clearly states that “You will see that the sit [sic] Fiji is in is dangerous and will

¹⁹ RFMF Senior Officers Presentation Paper to President and Interim Prime Minister, 28 August 1989.

²⁰ Deryck Scarr, *Tuimacilai: A Life of Ratu Sir Kamisese Mara* (Belair, South Australia: Crawford House Publishing, 2008), p. 246.

²¹ Sotomayor, ‘Unintended Consequences of Peace Operations for Troop-contributing Countries in South America’, p. 186.

develop into something much worse and resembling Lebanon and other troubled areas of the world.”²²

Doing a tour of duty in Lebanon, mediating and liaising amongst factional leaders such as the Palestinian Liberation Organization and Hezbollah, was part of a Fijian senior officer's routine. Many of the senior officers approved of the 1987 Rabuka coup, guided by their ethnic political loyalties and peacekeeping experiences. At the strategic level the unintended consequences of peacekeeping both socially and politically may not have been examined as it was never debated in parliament. UN academic specialist Ramesh Thakur first examined Fiji's UN peacekeeping participation as a positive instrument of the Alliance Government's foreign policy.²³ He analysed the contributions of mini-states and how Fiji was “punching above its weight” in international macro cooperation and creating a niche market for itself. Andrew Scobell was one of the first to argue that Fiji's international peacekeeping role was a factor in Rabuka executing the coups of 1987.²⁴ The 1987 Fiji Labour Party election manifesto had also “deplored the Royal Fiji Military Forces as becoming more of a band of mercenaries for the UN and MFO [Multinational Force and Observers] and its role should be reviewed”.²⁵ Scobell asserted it was the threat to this corporate interest that spurred Rabuka to act in toppling the Indo-Fijian dominated Fiji Labour Party/National Federation Party Coalition Government. Writing prior to the 1987 coup Thakur saw the positives, while Scobell's analysis afterwards dwelled on the risks of peacekeeping.

Australian aid to the RFMF through its Defence Cooperation Programme (DCP) has enabled it to grow and sustain its peacekeeping operations capability. Australia has provided training, logistics and infrastructure support to the RFMF on practically all of its peacekeeping missions. State-of-the-art 500 man mess hall and kitchen facilities were built in Queen Elizabeth Barracks Suva in 1984 and a fourteen bed military hospital built in 1996 through DCP. The mounting of a UN Fijian contingent to the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq in 2004 was made possible with DCP logistic support.

Peacekeepers to Mercenaries

In November 2005, the relationship between Fiji and Papua New Guinea became strained in the wake of reports that nine Fijian soldiers, believed to be mercenaries and former UN peacekeepers in the Middle East, were reportedly training a private militia on the island of Bougainville. Solomon

²² Eddie Dean and Stan Ritova, *Rabuka No Other Way* (Sydney: Doubleday, 1988), p. 167.

²³ Thakur, ‘Mini State and Macro Cooperation’, pp. 269-84.

²⁴ Andrew Scobell, ‘Politics, Professionalism and Peacekeeping: An Analysis of the 1987 Military Coup in Fiji’, *Comparative Politics*, vol. 26, no. 2 (January 1994), p. 196.

²⁵ Deryck Scarr, *Fiji: Politics of Illusion: The Military Coups in Fiji* (Kensington: New South Wales University Press, 1988), p. 63.

Islands Police Commissioner Shane Castles was quoted on 21 March 2006 as saying that police was aware that a Fijian security company was recruiting former Fijian soldiers and facilitating their movement through the Solomon Islands to Bougainville. The Bougainville President Joseph Kabui also stated that up to 100 Fijian Mercenaries could be on the way to the island.²⁶ On Australian national television, Kabui called on the governments of Fiji and Papua New Guinea to prevent their passage. Fiji Peacekeepers Association spokesman Taniela Senikuta blamed the Fiji Government's policy for the illegal activities in which some former soldiers were engaged.²⁷ He pointed out that, while returned servicemen from World War II received pensions, soldiers returning from peacekeeping duties did not, which made employment abroad, even in questionable ventures, attractive. Again, the unintended consequence of having a large body of trained soldiers and former peacekeepers that are unemployed is of concern not only to internal stability but to regional stability as a whole.

Fiji and Peacekeeping Ban

Despite Fiji's military being warned by the UN secretariat in November 2006 that if it conducted a coup, overthrew its government, and installed a military-led regime, its contribution to UN-led operations would be reduced or suspended, the UN actually increased the number of Fiji personnel deployed in the immediate post-coup period.²⁸ The Secretary General's office has admitted that:

The United Nations struggles to recruit professional and well-trained troops for peacekeeping duties in areas where those soldiers are potentially preventing civilian deaths from conflict. As a result they have often been forced to accept deployments from nations whose domestic human rights records are questionable.²⁹

Consequently, countries that have had coups in the recent past, such as Pakistan and Thailand, have been troop contributors to recent UN peacekeeping missions. A recent UN Mission Summary Report shows that on 31 May 2012, Fiji had deployed 359 soldiers and/or police to UN operations. This same report showed that Australia had contributed 112 personnel, Canada 158 and New Zealand twenty four. The data as compiled by Selwyn Manning shows that the governments of Australia and New Zealand have not impeded the participation of Fijian troops in UN peacekeeping operations. In May 2007, a spokesperson for New Zealand's then foreign minister, Winston Peters, said:

²⁶ *Fijilive.com*, 20 March 2006.

²⁷ *Fijivillage.com*, 11 February 2006.

²⁸ Selwyn Manning, 'Fiji's Military Regime Deploys More Personnel To UN Ops Than Australia, Canada, New Zealand Combined', 36th-Parallel.com, 13 July 2012, <<http://36th-parallel.com/2012/07/fijis-military-regime-deploys-more-personnel-to-un-ops-than-australia-canada-new-zealand-combined/>> [Accessed 3 November 2012].

²⁹ 'Government to Continue to Seek UN/Fiji Peacekeeper Ban', *Scoop News*, 21 May 2007.

New Zealand believes it is inappropriate for troops from Fiji to take part in UN operations at a time when the Fiji military has overthrown a democratically-elected government. We are also aware of the financial value of peacekeeping duties for Fiji's military.³⁰

Former Australian Prime Minister, Kevin Rudd, had also asserted that:

Through our interventions with the United Nations, supported by New Zealand and other countries, the UN now is not going to engage future Fijian troops for new operations. There is a question which now arises as to whether there should be a further tightening on top of that.³¹

As recently as May 2012 Fiji was invited to send eight UN military officers as observers to Syria, which it did.³² In spite of public calls and regional pressure to ban Fiji's further participation, it has not impeded a rise in the number of Fiji troops being deployed to UN operations since the December 2006 military coup.

Conclusion

For Fiji it was enticing to be recognised as a good international citizen by engaging in peacekeeping missions. Ratu Penaia Ganilau, the Minister of Home Affairs responsible for the military, would have needed little persuasion to undertake such a commitment, given the inherent *Turaga-bati* (patron-client) relationship between the ruling elite and the military. Prime Minister Mara's decision to commit troops resonates with Argentinean President Carlos Menem's decision to engage in UN peacekeeping for, "the low cost opportunity to receive overseas payments and perform a positive military role overseas which converged with foreign policy".³³ The expected spin-offs were attractive to a young independent nation. However, the decision later proved to have far-reaching and destabilising consequences for the nation. Engaging in peacekeeping has had the unintended consequence of encouraging the military to develop a political mediator role. However, there is a contradiction between conforming to international peacekeeping norms and the allegations of violations of human rights brought against the military in the 1987, 2000 and 2006 coups. It appears that the United States, New Zealand and Australia have turned a blind eye to Fiji's continued deployment in international peacekeeping because of its troops' prowess and professionalism in the field.

The expanded mediator role however of Fiji's military is now inconsistent with the western definition of military professionalism as adhered to prior to the 1987 coup. Hence the militarisation of government and society at large has continued with Commodore Bainimarama's coup of 2006.

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ 'Push to Block Fiji from UN Peacekeeping', *Sydney Morning Herald*, 29 April 2009.

³² 'Fiji To Send UN Peacekeepers To Syria', *Radio Australia*, 6 May 2012.

³³ Sotomayor, 'Unintended Consequences of Peace Operations for Troop-contributing Countries in South America', p. 1764.

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