



Nancy Mullins (Hart)



1953-1957

After completing her M.A. Hons at Auckland University, Nancy joined the New Zealand Diplomatic Service, serving in Wellington and overseas in Paris and Canberra. She was also assigned to the New Zealand Permanent Mission to the United Nations to serve on the Third Committee of the General Assembly in the 1960s when major human rights conventions were concluded, and which continue to underpin universal standards.

Another major concern then was the continued development of nuclear weaponry. Moreover, nuclear weapons tests were still being carried out in the atmosphere, with radioactive fallout affecting people and the environment. Nancy was assigned to policy work on these issues in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (then known as the Department of External Relations). In 1973 there was a major breakthrough when the New Zealand and the Australian Governments both lodged a case with the International Court of Justice in the Hague against atmospheric nuclear weapons testing by France in the Pacific. In the course of proceedings, France responded with an announcement that it would conduct no more tests in the atmosphere.

These were two highlights in a long career full on interest - and of course challenging at the same time. It also required co-operation of a high order among people - to implement Government policies and achieve results. *"No man is an island"* as poet John Donne wrote. Nor woman either, especially in our era!