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It is a privilege to be appointed to the role of the executive director of the New Zealand Institute of International Affairs, and to be the first woman to occupy this position. I would like to thank the institute for putting their trust in me, and offering me this exciting and challenging role. I would also like to acknowledge my predecessor, Peter Kennedy, for his dedication, and remarkable work at the institute for the last three years, and wish him wholeheartedly all the best in his future endeavours.

In an ever changing world, in the face of new power dynamics, security challenges and economic inter-dependencies, and with a non-permanent seat at the United Nations Security Council, the role of the NZIIA today is as vital as ever. The NZIIA is one of world’s pioneering institutes of international affairs, having been established more than 80 years ago, before the very foundation of the United Nations. This was at a time of great social and economic upheaval worldwide. It is this same pioneering spirit that we hope to harness today, to engage New Zealanders from all walks of life; to provide a trusted platform on international affairs and analyse their impact on New Zealand.

Our mission is to provide a bridge between knowledge and power, to converse, to question and to inform about events that occur near or far, but which are of importance to our own well-being, and that are sometimes lacking in the public discourse. Being in the Antipodes, we are well placed to know that there is not one unique way and angle of looking at global affairs. In other words, we do not live in a black and white world, but in a world of many shades of grey. Bringing perspective and broadening debate on international issues across different sections of society is our ambition. Importantly, our independent and non-partisan reputation is key to our success.

Our recent major event ‘The Potential Pitfalls and Windfalls of the Nuclear Deal with Iran’, held on 16 September at Parliament, generated much interest. The event was over-subscribed and there was a full house at the Beehive Theatre. The panel discussion was planned using a format I pioneered at Diplosphere: six high-profile speakers, with different views, speaking six minutes, followed by a 20-minute question and answer session, all managed in a timely manner. The purpose is not to lecture, but rather to engage via straight-forward, to the point, discussion and interact with the audience in the room and on social networks live.

We made full use of technology. Two of our speakers were based overseas, and thanks to the considerable efforts of the Parliament audio and video team, we managed a tri-nation panel using video conference technology. The NZIIA was pleased to receive much positive feedback in the following days. Audio transcripts and audio podcasts of the discussion were requested by many, and we hope soon to make these available through our website (www.nzii.org.nz). Additionally, most of the panellists have contributed parts of the panel discussion in written form to the current issue.

I very much look forward to welcoming you to upcoming events.

Maty Nikkhou-O’Brien
The upsides and downsides of the Iranian nuclear deal

Robert Patman and Laura Southgate argue that the agreement will not only curtail Iran's nuclear programmes but also provide diplomatic side benefits.

The signing of the nuclear accord between Iran and the so-called P5+1 group — the United States, United Kingdom, France, Russia, China and Germany, along with the European Union — in Vienna on 14 July 2015 is a historic agreement that caps nearly two years of strenuous negotiations and potentially ends one of the world's most serious crises.

The nuclear deal was subject to a 60-day review by the US Senate after it was signed. However, it became clear by 18 September that US Senate Democrats had successfully blocked legislation to prevent the deal going ahead. By a vote of 56–42, the Republican majority in the Senate failed to obtain the 60 votes required. This result followed an intense period of lobbying in Washington, during which the pros and cons of the deal were fiercely debated.

US President Barack Obama hailed the Iran nuclear agreement as a landmark 'in our pursuit of a safer, more helpful and more hopeful world'.1 But Israel and Saudi Arabia, key US allies in the Middle East region, strongly oppose the deal and claim that it undermines their security. Conservative politicians in the United States largely agree while hardliners in Iran portray the deal as a defeat for Iran.

Main points

Known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, the agreement sets verifiable limits on Iran's nuclear programme by eliminating pathways to a nuclear weapon in exchange for the gradual removal of international economic sanctions against Teheran.

Under the deal, Iran will give up the bulk of its nuclear programme, namely its enriched uranium (nuclear fuel) and its centrifuges (which turn fuel into weapons material). Iran will also have to submit to a very vigorous and intrusive inspections regime to ensure full compliance. If Iran violates these terms, sanctions can and will be 'snapped back' immediately.

In return, the international community will gradually phase out the oil and financial sanctions that have been placed on Iran, and Teheran retains just enough nuclear capability to sustain a peaceful energy programme. These provisions last for at least ten years, with some extending to 25 years.

Deal upsides

Many arms control specialists have reacted enthusiastically to this agreement. Joe Cirincione said it 'reverses and contains what most experts consider the greatest nuclear proliferation challenge in the world'.2 Mark Fitzpatrick said that Iran has accepted under the deal 'constraints and obligations' that 'go beyond the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT)',3 while Mohsen Milani characterised the deal as 'a transformative event for the Middle East' and one which 'will surely be one of President Barack Obama's most consequential foreign policy achievements'.4

Three aspects of the Iran nuclear arms deal have been highlighted. First, it significantly reduces the prospect that Iran will obtain a nuclear bomb during the next decade or so. American and European diplomats have effectively closed most of the avenues and loopholes that Iran could use to advance its nuclear weapons programme. The enriched-uranium stockpile and the number of centrifuges will be slashed. The plutonium route is denied, and Iran has accepted an inspection regime — from uranium mines to procurement channels — that is sufficiently rigorous to accurately monitor and verify Iran's implementation of the deal.

Second, the nuclear deal will ease Iran's economic suffering and politically boost more moderate elements in the country like President Hassan Rouhani, who described the agreement as 'a first step toward decreasing enmity with the U.S.'5 Sanctions imposed by the United States, United Nations and European Union to press Iran to halt uranium enrichment have cost Teheran more than $160 billion in oil revenue since 2012. Iran now stands to

The nuclear agreement between Iran and the P5+1 group limits Iran's nuclear programme in return for the gradual removal of international economic sanctions against Teheran. While the deal significantly reduces an Iranian nuclear weapons threat, it has been condemned for simply stalling the danger at the cost of expanding the assets of a regionally assertive actor. However, the claim that a better multilateral deal with Iran was possible is not convincing. The Iran nuclear accord achieves the central goal of constraining Teheran's nuclear programmes and has the potential to facilitate a diplomatic dialogue on critical issues like Syria.

Dr Robert G. Patman is professor of international relations in the Department of Politics, University of Otago, and Laura Southgate is a PhD candidate in the same department.
receive more than $100 billion in frozen assets overseas, and is set to resume selling oil on international markets and expand trade through the global financial system.

Third, the nuclear accord has made another war in the Middle East less likely. Sanctions were certainly hurting Iran, but did not seem to be stopping its nuclear progress. Israel, and more significantly the United States, did not rule out the possible use of military action to halt Iran's nuclear programme. War is a high-risk option that threatens to sow further chaos in a region already convulsed by multiple conflicts and instability. Thus, diplomacy has significantly curtailed Iran's nuclear progress and appears to have averted a new and catastrophic conflict in the Middle East.

**Deal downsides**

Opponents of the deal include the governments of Israel and Saudi Arabia, and conservative politicians in the United States. Israel’s Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said it was a ‘bad mistake of historic proportions’;6 Saudi Arabia has warned that the nuclear accord with Teheran could fuel a nuclear arms race in the Middle East; and US Republican Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell said the deal left Iran ‘empowered as a nuclear threshold state armed with billions in sanctions relief’.7 Such opposition reflects a number of major concerns. For one thing, critics question what will happen to Iran’s nuclear programme when the deal ends in 10–15 years time.8 Opponents claim Iran will be left with a ‘threshold’ nuclear weapons capability, and that the deal merely postpones, rather than prevents, a nuclear armed Iran.9

In addition, there are fears that the deal could serve to increase Iran’s regional ambitions, including extra funding for proxies such as Hezbollah in Lebanon or the Assad regime in Syria.10 According to Republican Senator Ted Cruz of Texas, lifting sanctions against Iran would effectively make the Obama administration the leading financier of Islamic terrorism.11 Moreover, many observers believe the United States should have pushed for a better deal with Iran, and missed the chance to negotiate a tougher deal at a time when Iran was desperate to alleviate the cumulative economic impact of sanctions. Ultimately, the idea of a better deal reflects the belief that the United States had the ability to dictate the negotiations with Iran but lacked the political will to make it happen.12

**Reframed threat**

While the nuclear deal will not resolve all of the tensions generated by Iran’s foreign policy, it nevertheless represents a major diplomatic achievement. It is an illusion to believe that a better deal could have been negotiated. The current deal was achieved by long and patient negotiations and is strongly supported by key American allies as well as China and Russia.14 Any attempt to unilaterally renegotiate this deal would run the risk of losing international support and allowing Iran to resume nuclear activity in an unconstrained manner.15 The Iran nuclear agreement is important first and foremost for the right limits it places on Iran’s nuclear programmes — the major goal of the negotiations. But the accord also has the potential to widen the diplomatic dialogue between the United States and Iran and facilitate discussions on a range of pressing regional issues such as the Syrian civil war.

**NOTES**

7. Ibid.
10. Ibid.
11. Ibid.
The potential pitfalls and windfalls of the nuclear deal with Iran

Rouzbeh Parsi, Ephraim Asculai, Paul Morris, Negar Partow and Paul Buchanan provide perspectives on the deal.

Dr Rouzbeh Parsi is a senior lecturer at Lund University, Sweden, and former senior research fellow/analyst at the EU Institute for Security Studies for Iran, Iraq and Gulf countries. Dr Ephraim Asculai is a senior research fellow at the Institute for National Security Studies at Tel Aviv; he formerly served at the International Atomic Energy Agency. Prof Paul Morris is director of religious studies at Victoria University. Dr Negar Partow lectures at Massey University’s Centre for Defence and Security Studies and is a member of the NZIIA’s Standing Committee. Paul G. Buchanan is director of 36th Parallel Assessments, a geo-political and strategic consultancy. Their segments are the edited texts of the presentations they made at the NZIIA’s panel discussion at Parliament on 16 September 2015.

Rouzbeh Parsi
The Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action is probably one of the most intrusive and comprehensive multilateral agreements to try and ensure non-proliferation. It will put Iran under scrutiny for many years — up to 25 years depending on which aspect of the nuclear programme you are looking at — and, of course, beyond, because there are certain things for which there is no sunset clause. Iran will be forced not only to sign but also to ratify the Additional Protocol, which is open ended with no time limit. And that will ensure further scrutiny of that programme.

How has this played out inside Iran? I think we can see a rather predictable dichotomy between those who are interested in and willing to engage in greater interaction with the world and can even contemplate some kind of relationship with the United States, or at least less hostility, and the hardliners, who for either ideological or other reasons think that this very process is wrong. So there are those who are against it on ideological and principle grounds. Then there are always people who think that they could have secured a better deal. This is being mirrored very much by the American hardliners, especially in the United States Congress, who believe that the American bargaining position was much stronger and, therefore, should have yielded further concessions from the other side. Both parties believe this. And both are, in my opinion, quite wrong, because they are overestimating their own strength and under-estimating that of their counterparts.

The problem for the Iranian government that has signed this deal is, of course, to manage the expectations of what it will mean for Iran itself. And here primarily it is a question of the economy. Because we have to remember that this government went to the elections, and won, on the promise of resuscitating the Iranian economy, which is in bad shape now. This is because of the way it has been managed to a large degree but also partly because of the sanctions. So one of the ways quickly to be able to resuscitate it would be to have the sanctions lifted in order to be able trade much more with less constraint. So, in a sense, the negotiations and this deal are an extension of an electoral promise that has lot more to do with domestic politics than it has to do with foreign policy. By being able to deliver on the deal, they now have great expectations among this population that voted for them to an overwhelming degree to do exactly that, to bring the economy back into life, and quickly. This is, of course, a problem because the sanctions relief and the actual effects of the relief will take much longer to come into effect than people would expect. So here is a management issue to deal with. This is problem number one.

Problem number two is that this being a victory, it has to be narrated and portrayed as such if the government is to win the parliamentary elections in February next year. So this again has to do with how the government can capitalise on the risk it took by entering these negotiations. And here we can see that the hardliners are now increasingly trying to portray this particular negotiated deal in a very bad light. Because they know very well that they most likely cannot derail it. All the different parties within the system of the Islamic Republic have, more or less, lined up as ducks in a row and agreed to this negotiated deal. So if derailment is unlikely, they will probably try to win the narrative about what it was about. And the best parallel there probably would be the Obama administration’s success in bringing something that looks like universal health coverage in the United States — the Affordable Health Act — which in the media narrative, especially on Fox News, became Obamacare. If you listened to the media narrative it looked almost as though it was a failure, even though in legislative terms it was a success. And you can see the same thing in Iran now. The hardliners are trying to say that it is not only a bad deal but also a failure in every sense imaginable. This is a way of stealing the thunder of the government for the upcoming parliamentary elections next year. So the temperature is rising in Iran, exactly because the big prize is now who gets to tell the story of the nuclear deal and what it meant.

Will this then have implications for Iran’s foreign policy? Yes, it could. It is not a guarantee. One does not immediately translate into the other. But what it will do, and this is also something that worries some other countries, such as Saudi Arabia and Israel, is
provide Iran with the opportunity to now much more easily have a seat at the proverbial table to discuss whatever the issue happens to be, whether it is Iraq or Syria or other issues. It is not that Iran will suddenly turn into a country that agrees with everything the West, for instance, thinks or assesses with regards to Syria. But the fact that Iran now will be brought to the table will increase the chances of being able to do something about the utter disaster of Syria. That is potentially important, but it will not materialise by itself by virtue of the fact that the deal is there. It would not have been possible at all had there not been a deal.

Will all this mean a closer relationship with the United States? I think the easiest way to understand the ideologists’, hardliners’ and many others’ view on this is to consider this in the following way: Iran has a dysfunctional non-relationship with the United States, and that, in a sense, is an extension of the revolutionary ethos of the 1979 revolution. And there are groups in Iran who are very comfortable with this very predictable enemy and they would like to keep it that way. What this deal does, even though that is not what is in the paper, so to speak, of the deal, is to create a functional non-relationship with the United States. And what the hardliners fear is that this is a slippery slope towards a functional relationship. This would in a sense upend that particular aspect of the revolution, which is one of the few things they can still cling onto because they have not really managed or succeeded in many other things that they promised when they fomented that revolution.

Ephraim Asculai
I am a citizen of a state that Iran’s past and present supreme leaders, its presidents and other officials have declared time and again must be annihilated. Moreover, Iran is actively engaged in denying the Holocaust, the most horrifying event in the last century that caused the extermination of some six million of my people. Therefore, treating the Iran case with equanimity is not an easy task for me. Given this background, and given the past history of Iran’s behaviour in the nuclear arena, it is necessary to take a pessimistic view and assess the situation and prospects in a most exact way, trying not to be taken in by a charm offensive and meaningless gestures.

I shall deal first with the potential pitfalls of the deal, and these are many. Because of space limitations I shall not go into the technical details of these. At the moment, and recalling the US president’s assessment that today Iran is within two months of producing a nuclear weapon, the situation is dire. The deal is supposed to extend this period to one year. Can this be verified?

Pitfall number one is the inherent inability of the inspectors to verify that no concealed activities are taking place in undeclared facilities. Notwithstanding the convoluted process by which a site can be inspected, this is completely dependent on the information that must be placed before the commission that has to approve such an inspection. This information must also be presented to Iran. However, this information needs to be first gathered and then declassified. Both actions are problematic. Intelligence is not infallible and declassification cannot always be assured. Moreover, Iran will always have the power to deny access to suspect sites.

Pitfall number two is the major difficulty in assuring that no research and development activities regarding the development of the non-fissile components of the explosive mechanism, essential for the development of a nuclear weapon, are taking place. This will supposedly be taken care of in resolving what is called the ‘Possible Military Dimensions’ of Iran’s nuclear programme. These are limited to eleven questions that have been posed to Iran by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) in 2011. These are indicative of the dimensions, but certainly do not encompass the whole issue of the development of the nuclear explosive mechanism. Even if these eleven issues are resolved, including the ‘red herring’ of Parchin, the development activities can go on elsewhere.

Pitfall number three is the on-going development of long-range missiles, which have little defence uses but are uniquely suited to the delivery of weapons of mass destruction.

Pitfall number four is the demonstrated unreliability of Iran to adhere to its commitments, beginning with those under the Non-Proliferation Treaty, for which the Security Council found it to have been in non-compliance with its obligations. If Iran had really wanted to be trusted, it should have opened all its facilities to inspections without any hindrance; it could have restored relations with the United States and Israel, and become a state ‘like Japan’. This is not forthcoming.

Pitfall number five is the time limitation of the agreement, after which Iran will return to its previous capabilities and be potentially able to produce nuclear weapons almost at will.

Pitfall number six is at the same time Iran’s windfall number one: the further Iran’s persistence in upholding the deal, the further it will get in honing its nuclear capabilities, when any breakout will enable it to produce better nuclear weapons in much shorter times.

And the windfall number two for Iran is obvious: the lifting of sanctions.
the sanctions, even if gradually, will bring it prosperity and a lessening will of the international community to confront Iran on the nuclear issue. Iran, with its record of terrorist support and regional belligerence, will have reached a prominent status, with a frightening nuclear potential that will be most difficult to control. Can Iran be trusted not to utilise it?

An almost inevitable question is: is there a windfall for Iran’s adversaries? On the one hand, there is the postponement of the almost inevitable crisis. On the other hand, this crisis, if and when it comes, could be much fiercer than one at present. Many hope for either a regime change in Iran or at least an attitude change. This is a gamble, and a very uncertain one at that.

What, then, is to be done? Simply put — pay attention to all pitfalls and do the utmost to avoid the certain disastrous consequences if nothing is done.

**Paul Morris**

Since 1979 Iranian leaders have made overtures to the West, particularly the United States, that have been systematically rebuffed, costing nearly a decade of worsened relations with no discernible benefit. For example, the final collapse of relations that began with the 1979 US Embassy crisis could have ended with the release of the 52 hostages in January 1981 to mark President Reagan’s inauguration.

President Khatami, a leading proponent of inter-civilisational and inter-religious dialogue, was the inspiration behind the 2001 UN Year of the Dialogue Among Civilisations. President Bush’s inclusion of Iran in the ‘axis of evil’ in his State of the Union Address in 2002 is indicative of American responses to such Iranian initiatives. In spite of this, in 2003 Iran approached the United States with proposals to negotiate all outstanding concerns, including nuclear weapons and a two-state solution to Israel and Palestine. This was again rebuffed. In 2005 Khatami called on religious leaders to abolish nuclear and chemical weapons on religious grounds at a conference that he hosted. In 2007 he visited Washington to again attempt to open up dialogue.

Khatami publicly articulated — and it is lamentable that this even merits a mention — that the Holocaust was historical fact. He also acknowledged the president of Israel at a meeting, the first post-1979 ‘recognition’. He was a popular two-term president who committed to an Islamic form of modernisation and the re-establishment of normal diplomatic relations. More recently in 2013 at the UN General Assembly, Iranian President Rouhani called for a ‘constructive engagement’ between Iran and other nations.

My contention is that there have been consistent overtures from Iran to re-establish relations with other countries. There is even evidence to suggest that from 2003 to 2007 Iran significantly withdrew from its nuclear weapons programme. Whether sanctions have in fact worked in bringing Iran to the negotiating table or whether they would have sought to open diplomatic channels independently of this does not matter. The sanctions have hurt the Iranian state and people, but to refuse to negotiate now would defeat the whole purpose. Eternal sanctions serve no function.

The current ‘deal’ is testament to the positive response by President Obama’s administration. The ‘deal’ is a unique agreement between eight partners — Iran, Britain, France, Germany, Russia, China, the United States and the European Union. Even its detractors concede that it will delay Iran’s nuclear weapons capability by a decade, some say longer. This seems to be more than an acceptable outcome.

The agreement is progressively to lessen sanctions in return for Iran not continuing its nuclear weapons programme. Can Iran be trusted? No, not more than any nation-state can. But it is not a deal based on trust. Nor is it a deal amongst friends or allies. The lifting of sanctions requires Iran to implement ‘core requirements’, including mothballing centrifuges, reducing uranium stocks and closing the Arak plutonium plant, and all this to the satisfaction of the IAEA. The ‘deal’ is just the beginning of a lengthy process and claims that it will irrevocably re-establish full trade and diplomatic relations are irresponsibly premature.

Objectors point to two limitations. First, Iran has played a growing role in funding ‘terrorist’ groups, although it should be acknowledged that these regional interventions were in large part generated by the fall of Saddam Hussein and the vacuum this created. Second, there is the sometimes uncertain nature of jurisprudential leadership. We do not know as yet by who or how the ‘deal’ will be formally ratified. But again it is important to note that after three decades a pattern of decision-making that is reasonably predictable has been established.

The Iranian position on Israel is unacceptable and must be revised before there can be positive changes in the region but, even so, Israeli notables such as former heads of all three primary intelligence agencies express qualified support for the ‘deal’ on the grounds that it will delay Iranian nuclear weapon capability and that the inspections will enhance military intelligence on strategic locations.

This is a historic opportunity for dialogue to commence as a first step to the resolution of regional conflicts and can be seen as a success for the UN sanctions process. Dialogue is always preferable to the alternatives.

**Negar Partow**

I would like to draw attention to some of the windfalls of Iran’s nuclear deal that could assist us to have a comprehensive map of the deal for assessment. The first is that whether one trusts or mistrusts Iran, having a deal that keeps Iran in the NPT and brings it under further monitoring by the international community and the IAEA is far more beneficial for all the parties involved than any other alternative.

In the context of Iran’s domestic politics, the deal will strengthen the position of the reformists, who have been weakened significantly since the beginning of Ahmadinejad’s presidency in 2001 and further after the 2009 Green Movement. Moreover, the deal allows a radically different economic interaction with the world that transforms the network of power in Iran with a consequential regional impact. Domestically, the new economic order fosters transparency and accountability in Iran’s government. As the result of the sanctions many economic trades have been taking place at the periphery of the state and by individuals. This resulted in the emergence of many brokers and secretive deals, which economically benefited a small group of conservative Revolutionary Guards. In Iran, they are known as the ‘Merchants of the Sanctions’. This is the group that suffered from the loss of benefits as the result of the signing of the
deal. Subsequent to the ending of the sanctions, the deal results in a move towards anti-corruption and economic transparency, which enables the international community to have a more efficient monitoring system over Iran's economic activities in the region without directly interfering in the country's internal affairs.

Since the signing of the deal, Iran has shown strong eagerness for economic progress and for having a more positive role in the region's politics. Their eagerness, if accompanied by pressure from the international community, could contribute to securing more respect for human rights, and pressure the government of Iran on specific human rights issues for which the United Nations has been criticising Iran for decades (including gender equality, imprisonment of journalists, capital punishment and civil rights of the Bahá'í community) but has not been successful in resolving them.

These factors bring about a radical shift in Iran's politics, which will have an impact on regional politics. Interestingly, the discourse of the deal and its political consequences create an inversion in the regional politics. This is the factor that instigates regional challenges and could breed further conflicts. Inversion is a characteristic of Middle East regional politics. It happened in 1979 following Iran's revolution and is happening again as the result of the deal. In the Middle East, countries define their regional status and power based on the strength of their political ties with the United States. As the deal signals the possible resumption of political ties between Iran and the United States, it will inevitably worry other regional powers with a rippling effect. This is the main reason for Israel's and Saudi Arabia's security concerns.

This is what I call the stage of flux, where each actor in the region has to redefine its ideological and political issues. This does not exclude Iran. Iran has to change its rhetoric and regional policies. This has two major regional consequences. The first is that in this context the deal can give momentum to democratic movements in the region. In the short term, however, it could potentially feed into various conflicts in the region, including sectarian conflicts, and promote fear of Iran's domination of the region and its economic or ideological expansion.

**Paul Buchanan**

The Iranian nuclear control agreement with the P5+1 group (the UN Security Council permanent members plus Germany) can be viewed on two analytic levels: as a first image (interstate) issue and as a second image (domestic sources of foreign policy) matter. The two levels of analysis can be understood as part of a nested or multi-layered game: the agreement is part of a series of interlocked actions that much like iconic Matryoshka dolls are component parts of a larger whole. The nuclear accord is the inner core of a regional and global repositioning of Iran.

The substance of the agreement is the exchange of trade for recognition and security. Iran gets more trade and recognition of its legitimate interests and stature as a regional power by putting the brakes on its nuclear weapons development programme, with an eye to cancelling the programme altogether should the agreement prove beneficial for all sides. The main lever for doing so is another tradeoff: dropping of international sanctions against Iran in exchange for a rigorous international (IAEA-managed) inspections regime.

At the inter-state level the agreement provides a means of bringing Iran back into the community of nations and is a potential first step in recalibrating the regional balance of power with the Sunni Arab states. The latter have proven to be unreliable allies of the West when it comes to combating violent Sunni extremism, and it is counterproductive not to recognise Iran's obvious status as a regional power. Moreover, given their respective interests, both Iran and Russia need to be included in any negotiations on ending the Syrian civil war as well as in the fight against Daesh (ISIS). Establishing a basis of understanding via the nuclear accord is a step towards formally bringing Iran into both equations.

The downside involves the reaction of Israel and the Sunni Arab oligarchies as well as domestic opponents in Iran and the United States. There are disloyal hardliners in both the countries that have potential veto power over the deal should governments change. It is, therefore, essential that soft liners/moderates or realists/pragmatists demonstrate tangible benefits from the deal in order to resist the sabotage efforts of those who have vested, self-serving reasons for keeping tensions alive. Some of these are ideological, but most involve issues of domestic politics and the power of actors that will be weakened should the agreement prove successful.

In spite of the objections of Western hardliners, Iran should be seen as akin to Cuba rather than North Korea: it can be brought into the community of nations so long as it is recognised as a regional power with legitimate interests in the Middle East and beyond.

Lifting of sanctions on Iran opens a window of trade opportunity for New Zealand exporters and importers. Foreign Minister Murray McCully is leading a trade mission to Iran to discuss those opportunities. This is in advance of the implementation of the accord (which goes into effect at the start of next year) and is the first official Western government-led trade mission to Iran in the wake of the signing of the agreement.

That trade mission must have one caveat. New Zealand's opening of trade relations with Iran is explicitly contingent upon Iran adhering to its part of the nuclear accord. Should Iran renege on the letter or the spirit of the agreement and the inspections regime that it authorises, New Zealand needs to make clear that it will suspend trading until Iran complies.

The agreement hinges on two things: verification and enforcement (or as Ronald Reagan once said, 'trust and verify'). There are instruments in place to verify that Iran is upholding its part of the bargain. The sanctions will begin to be lifted on 1 January 2016.

However, enforcement of the terms is the most uncertain aspect of the agreement. Regardless of whether sanctions are reimposed, if New Zealand does not tie its renewed trade with Iran to the latter's compliance with the terms and is not prepared to halt trade with Iran in the event that it does not comply, it will become party to undermining the deal. For a current Security Council member that depends more on reputation than power for its influence, and which has a past record of leadership on non-proliferation, that is an unsavoury position to be in.
US foreign policy: Obama and beyond

Elliott Abrams predicts an increase in American military capacity and a more assertive role in international affairs.

On 2 August 2015, we marked the 25th anniversary of the day in 1990 when 100,000 Iraqi troops invaded Kuwait. It is a good moment to reflect on what that event and the American reaction to it meant for American foreign policy — and to reflect on American foreign policy in the next 25 years.

I doubt that many Americans thought, 25 years ago, that the country would henceforth be ensnared in the politics of the Middle East in a way that it never had been before.

But since that day, it has been the Middle East where crises have most demanded American leadership and American military commitments — not Europe and Asia, where the United States had previously fought all of its major foreign wars. As the analyst Vance Serchuk has written,

While challenges elsewhere would compete for Washington’s attention in the years after Desert Storm — including the disintegration of Yugoslavia, periodic tensions with North Korea, and the rise of China — it has been the problems of the Middle East that, rightfully or not, have dominated the U.S. diplomatic and security agenda during this period.

It is a bit hard to recall this fact, but prior to that day in August 1990 the United States had not been much involved in the Middle East militarily. The British had pulled back from the region and the United States had steadily emerged as the replacement to British imperial hegemony, but it was not until the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan that the Carter administration established a joint military task force for the region, an arrangement that would grow into US Central Command (CENTCOM).

Twenty-five years ago, then, we began to see the United States pivot from Asia and Europe to the Middle East. Men, machines, bases, headquarters, expenditures and new alliances followed. As Serchuk wrote, 'The American military marched into the Gulf in late 1990 to evict the Iraqis from Kuwait, and it has never really left.'

Successful campaign

There can be little doubt that President Obama decided it was time to leave, and campaigned and won office on that policy idea. His policy has been to end the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, or rather, to end the American role in them, and famously then to 'pivot to Asia'.

Of course, that pivot is, so far, not a very impressive thing to behold. For one thing, how can one pivot forcefully when American military budgets keep declining and the forces available are fewer? For another, the pivot has been delayed by the rise of jihadiism — principally ISIS, the Islamic State — and the obvious need to combat it.

I would suggest that the 'pivot to Asia' is in any event a minor theme in Obama policy. The major theme has been to diminish American commitments overseas and to re-make America's role. Obama viewed that role as wrong in two ways. It was too large, thus spending money he wanted to spend at home — 'nation-building here at home', he called it in 2012. And, it was not sufficiently progressive. Over the years we had overthrown progressive regimes, acted aggressively, been on the wrong side of history. This would change. We would now 'extend a hand', in Obama’s words, to enemies such as Cuba and Iran — and he has done so. He has also apologised for past US actions in Iran, Cuba, and elsewhere. American foreign policy has done less rather than more — less in Afghanistan and Iraq, less in Syria, less in confronting Putin.

Less, that is, than his predecessor did, but that should not come as such a surprise. American foreign policy has often swung this way. We saw it after the First World War, with the defeat of the League of Nations treaty by the US Senate and a general policy of staying out of another European war. We certainly saw it during the Cold War, and my colleague at the Council on Foreign Relations, Steven Sestanovich, details it all in a very good book entitled Maximalist. As he described it, American foreign policy has swung like a pendulum from doing too much to doing too little.

Maximalists (he lists Truman, Kennedy, Reagan, and George W. Bush) have ‘wanted a big package of countermeasures’ against threats; retrenchers (he lists Eisenhower, Nixon, Ford, Carter and Obama) have set out to ‘shift responsibilities to friends and allies, to explore accommodation with adversaries, to narrow commitments and reduce costs’.

The major theme of Barack Obama’s presidency has been to diminish American commitments overseas and to re-make America’s role. His policy has been to end the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, or rather, to end the American role in them, and famously then to ‘pivot to Asia’. These represent the end of a swing in a pendulum. A swing back can now be anticipated. Military spending will increase under the next president, whoever that may be. Even before the presidential election in 2016 we will see a more aggressive US policy in the Middle East against ISIS, from a president who has greatly resisted this.
Excessive swings

In his view, the United States nearly always swings too far, and then the public becomes restive, and events and public opinion combine to push the pendulum back. Dangers grow visibly, and produce a reaction, perhaps an over-reaction, and a few years later the pendulum swings again. Of course, for those watching from outside the United States, this can become a bit disorienting — perhaps dizziness or even nausea can result.

In my view, we have reached the end of one swing of that pendulum now, with President Obama's policies, and with the cuts in defence spending reached under him — of course with the consent of Congress, which controls the national budget. I believe the decline in military spending has come to an end, and that we will see it increase under the next president — whoever that is.

There was a big increase in military spending under Reagan, after the declines under Carter. Everyone knows that, of course — but it is not true. The rise in military spending began under Carter in 1979 and 1980, after the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan and several other events in 1979: the fall of the Shah and the Sandinista takeover of Nicaragua, for example. The Reagan military build-up began well before Reagan entered office, then, and represents a swing of the pendulum of the sort Sestanovich describes.

I believe we will see this in the year before Obama leaves office and under his successor. We will also see a more aggressive policy in the Middle East against ISIS, from a president who has greatly resisted this. Obama drew a red line against the use of chemical weapons in Syria and then backed away from enforcing it; he rejected the advice in 2012 of his secretary of state, Hillary Clinton, and his secretary of defense and his CIA director, to take a larger hand in Syria. But now we see more Americans on the ground in Iraq and we see Americans using Turkish air bases to bomb ISIS.

Intolerable threat

Obama’s successor will continue these actions, because American security demands it — and so does American leadership. That is, the spread of ISIS across more territory, the establishment of such a state in greater parts of Syria and Iraq, threatening Jordan and Israel and Saudi Arabia, is not tolerable. And so the United States will become more involved in organising and leading efforts to stop it.

Here a lesson has been learned, once again: the need for American leadership. In a way the Obama years have been an experiment in withholding that leadership, and the results are not satisfactory — neither in Iraq and Syria, nor in Ukraine, nor anywhere else. When I speak to officials in countries that see a national security threat — Jordan and Israel and the UAE and Saudi Arabia confronting ISIS and Iran, Poland and the Czech Republic and the Baltic nations confronting Putin’s Russia, Vietnam, Taiwan, South Korea, the Philippines and Japan confronting China — I hear pretty much the same concerns. Will the United States be strong enough and willing enough to play the role it has played since 1945?

In my view, the answer is yes, regardless of the outcome of next year’s presidential election. Some of the candidates in both parties no doubt make you laugh or frown or experience severe indigestion, or all three, but those people will not win. Someone like Clinton or Bush or Rubio or Walker will win, and they are not radicals. They understand the role of American leadership, of keeping commitments, of remaining strong. Indeed, I am struck by the common ground among them on foreign and defence policy, not by yawning gaps. Such differences as there are will no doubt be magnified by the heat of political competition, but look beyond election rhetoric.

I would instead address two questions: is America strong enough, and is it willing, to bear the burden of global leadership in the coming decades. The answer to both questions is yes.

Revealing polls

Let us look at public opinion for a moment. In 2014, polls by the Pew Center, a leading opinion research organisation, found that 48 per cent of Americans believed the United States was playing a less important and less powerful role in the world than a decade before. And they did not like it — more and more Americans said the world was more dangerous now (65 per cent) and more and more said the United States was doing too little to ‘help solve world problems’. Concern about Russia rises in every poll. Forty-eight per cent of Americans see China as a ‘major threat’ to the United States. In a 2014 poll, 54 per cent of Americans said the Obama approach to world affairs was ‘not tough enough’ versus 36 per cent saying it is about right. In 2014, Americans were more concerned that the country would become too deeply involved in Iraq and Syria than were concerned that we were not doing enough. In 2015, according to Pew polling, those numbers flipped: more Americans worried our efforts were inadequate. Pew’s 2013 poll of America’s role in the world found only 12 per cent of Americans seeking to shirk a leadership role. Nor should one think that the so-called ‘Tea Party’ Republicans are isolationists: they are nationalists, and polls show that they too believe the United States ‘does too little to solve world problems’.

It seems that the pendulum is swinging again. Fatigue with war casualties and costs no doubt peaked around the end of the previous decade and helps explain Obama’s victory in 2008. But now there is growing concern about a dearth of leadership, and more support for returning to the kind of roles Obama has spurned. A Gallup poll this year found this:

It doesn’t matter how much good news the U.S. economy has had, many Americans just aren’t satisfied. A solid half of all citizens told Gallup they think it is important for the United States to be the world’s largest economy. And while that’s only a slim majority — 49 percent still say it’s not important—it’s the highest in more than 20 years.

Obvious trend

So the trend is evident. Americans like to be first and become unhappy when they perceive challenges to that status.

But can the United States really maintain its position? I would suggest that the United States is actually far more favourably positioned than any rival.

The United States attracts one million immigrants a year, far more than any other country, and many of them are the best and brightest young people from places like India and China. They add vibrancy and initiative to our economy, and bring extraordinary intellectual and scientific assets — not to mention, by the way, financial assets. No other country benefits from such a large brain gain. Joseph Nye, the Harvard professor and former government official, recently wrote this:
A few years before his recent death, I asked Lee Kuan Yew, the former Prime Minister of Singapore and an astute observer of both the United States and China, whether he thought China would overtake the United States as the leading power of the 21st century. He said ‘no’, because the United States is able to re-create itself by attracting the best and brightest from the rest of the world and melding them into a diverse culture of creativity. China has 1.3 billion people to recruit from domestically, but in his view, its Sin-centric culture makes it less creative than the United States, which can draw upon a talent pool of more than 7 billion people.

Immigration affects demography, as does the birth rate. Most developed countries can expect to experience a shortage of people as this century progresses, whereas the US Census Bureau projects that between 2010 and 2050, the American population will grow by 42 per cent, to 439 million. According to UN demographers, today’s top-ranking states in terms of population are China, India and the United States. By 2050, they predict the order will be India, China and the United States.

**Rising power**

Let me stay on China for a moment, as it is the great rising power thought likely to replace the United States as a global leader. Because of its one-child policy in the past century, China’s population will age and actually shrink. As many Chinese say, they fear that their country will become old before we become rich. Economists estimate that China’s elderly population will increase by about half, or even more, in the next decade, while the working-age population decreases by perhaps a third. This is an unprecedented demographic shift in such a short time and presents serious challenges to the economic health of the nation.

The demographer Nicholas Eberstadt has put it this way: China today faces staggering demographic problems, including a shrinking pool of working-age men and women and a rapidly aging population that will slow economic growth, perhaps severely. The traditional family structure will be tested by, among other things, a growing army of unmarried men, a consequence of rampant sex-selective abortion in the One Child era.

China has 650 million people in the often-impoverished countryside and a GDP per capita ($6100) in 87th place in the world that is barely 12 per cent of American GDP per capita. Corruption is endemic and difficult to root out due to one-party Communist rule. Massive air and water pollution problems will take vast expenditures to end. Contrasts of poverty and wealth are grotesque, and will as likely as not produce political and social problems — if not upheavals.

Meanwhile, the United States remains the greatest target of foreign direct investment, at about $180 billion per year. Military spending, even at today’s sadly reduced levels, is far larger than that of any other country — about $600 billion.

**Striking change**

And then there is energy. Has there been a geo-political change more striking in the last decade than the return of the United States to the position of leading energy producer? The United States produced 5 million barrels of oil a day in 2005, and 9 million per day last year. In 2009 the United States became the world’s largest producer of natural gas, exceeding Russia. So today the United States remains the world’s top producer of hydrocarbons. And one result of the availability of cheap energy, and of rising labour costs around the world, has been a sort of re-industrialisation of the United States — that is, a return of jobs and factories that in past decades had gone overseas. Manufacturing employment and investment are growing steadily.

The effect on our economy is only one product of this energy revolution; the political effects are another, because the United States is moving toward energy independence — even more quickly if we add the rest of North America, Canada and Mexico. There is still one global price for oil and for gas, but North America will become a net energy exporter by 2020.

This is good news for the United States but perhaps less so for our friends in the Middle East. After all, the underlying reason for American involvement there was always oil and gas — not political or cultural affinity. Today, we need that energy less, and will need it even less in another decade. So in 2025, why should the United States be spending many billions of dollars defending China’s and India’s and Japan’s oil supplies? And New Zealand’s. Americans may some day wonder why this burden falls on us when others get the benefit. On the other hand, the famous ‘pivot to Asia’ may on that day become easier to imagine because in global economic and financial terms this is where the action is and will likely be.

That day is not today. Energy from the Middle East remains too important to us, and we have too many allies who are threatened in the Middle East — Arabs and Israelis. Moreover, the Middle East remains the centre of global jihad that threatens the United States as much as any country. Americans were reminded of this fact by the beheadings of three of our fellow citizens last year and it had a profound effect on public opinion. Isolationism is not widespread in the United States today; on the contrary, the desire for American leadership and strength are strong and arguably growing.

**Many challenges**

I have not referred to the many challenges the United States faces, from budget deficits that are too large to a defence budget that is still too small, from problems in race relations to a prison system that is far too large, from an educational system that is superb at the top but mediocre at the bottom and the middle to gridlock in many forms in Washington. That is because I do not find, as I travel, very many people saying that everything in the US is peachy. I find instead some deep misunderstandings of what Americans think about the country’s role in the world, and of the assets the United States holds.

Konrad Adenauer once quipped that the definition of history is ‘the sum total of things that could have been avoided’. Many errors, including many American errors, could have been avoided in the past few decades. But I am always cheered by the line in a favorite movie of mine, Casablanca, starring Humphrey Bogart. Several Nazi officers are sitting in a café talking with Claude Rains, who is playing a Vichy French officer, the Chief of Police Captain Renault. The topic of the United States arises and the Nazi Major Strasser says ‘The Americans are blunderers’. And Captain Renault replies, ‘I wouldn’t underestimate the Americans. I was with them in 1918 when they blundered into Berlin.’

I assure you there will be plenty more blunders. But there will also be plenty more strength and power, economic growth and population growth, and global leadership.
Countering over-stretch

Dmitry Shlapentokh puts the recent deal with Iran in the context of US decline.

The recent negotiation and final agreement between Iran and the United States and several other powers should be placed in the broad context of the US geo-political posture. In the last year or so Washington has scrapped its plans to strike Syria, allegedly because of Putin’s counter-measures. Washington was also unable to stop Russia annexing Crimea and exerting control over eastern Ukraine. ISIS is spreading through Iraq and Syria. The Iranian negotiations were related to all of these phenomena. They were one of the many manifestations of US decline and inability to project its power in post-Cold War fashion.

The Obama administration presents the deal as a victory. In its interpretation, the deal will save the United States and its allies from ‘insane’ people in Teheran. In the United States’ official discourse, Iranians would engage in suicidal use of atomic weapons. They will strike the United States and Israel regardless of the consequences. In Iranian eyes, the story is very different. If Iranians need a bomb, they need it as insurance from ‘preventive’ strikes by the United States/Israel. They want to re-build the great Persian empire but not to engage in self-destructive actions. The fact that the deal was reached implies that the plans for ‘preventive’ wars are abandoned. And these mark an important change in the US geo-political posture, reflecting its actual decline. This could well create difficulties not just for the United States but also for the global community.

Stark contrast

When considering current Washington/Teheran negotiations, one should bear in mind that the United States has not been engaged in any formal negotiation with Iran since 1979 and that discussion of the possibility of attacking Iran was going on during the George W. Bush administration. Even the use of nuclear weapons was not off the table. However, the present-day negotiations have been in stark contrast to the previous model of dealing with Iran.

President Obama’s critics regarded the deal as the sign of the president’s naïveté, weakness, inability ‘to lead’ or plain treason. Some implied that he made such a move because he is actually a Muslim and/or leftist ideologue who ignores the harsh reality of the geo-political stage and does not believe in the United States’ ‘exceptionalism’. Still, one would be naïve to attribute this to Obama’s personal characteristics or to believe that any new occupant of the White House would change the situation unless he/she was ready to make drastic changes in American society. The notion of American decline has become so prevalent that it has been discussed even in the pages of the New York Times. The ensuing intensive debate indicated that a considerable number of Americans believed in this assessment.

One should approach the definition of ‘decline’ with caution, remembering that such notions have been widely used by a variety of thinkers from Edward Gibbon to Oswald Spengler. A clear definition of what ‘decline’ actually means is essential. Of course, it would be naïve to follow Gibbon’s view of Roman decline that it stemmed from ‘moral’ degeneration, for example, the adverse impact on patriotic feeling of the proliferation of various indulgences. Still, Gibbon’s methodology has merit: it attributed the collapse/decline of the Roman state to a few significant developments. The study of each such phenomenon implied a certain over-simplification, yet it was essential to presenting his argument. Explanation of the United States’ geo-political decline

All the world’s aircraft-carriers

The agreement the United States and several other powers concluded with Iran recently has broad implications. It has nothing to do with saving the United States/Israel and the global community from ‘insane’ mullahs. It indicates that the United States has actually abandoned any idea of ‘preventive’ war with Iran, and further demonstrates changes in the United States’ socio-economic posture and related military capacity, which will inevitably lead to the further erosion of the US ‘empire’. This isolationist drive — structurally similar to that of the early post-Soviet Russia period — could have not just positive but also negative implications for the global community.
and growing inability to project its power can be reduced basically to two aspects: economic and the related, though separate, social problems.

Economic problems
The United States’ military power has been related to its economic predominance for a long time. However, that power is diminishing in both relative and absolute terms. The United States is producing less steel, cars and other products than it was producing 20–40 years ago. The quality of most of the products is also diminishing, as reflected in the constant decline of US products’ share in global markets. An even clearer manifestation of the United States’ economic decline is the increasing level of American debt, with shrinking chances that it will ever be paid.

These economic problems translated into the sequestration imposed by Congress, which included reduction in funds for the military. This in itself makes increasingly harder not just the acquisition of new military hardware but also the maintenance of a volunteer (‘professional’) army. The economic problems, however, will not necessarily be translated into diminishing power projection capacity. Countries with comparatively limited economic potential can, after all, project considerable strength. With all of its problems and declining economic power, the United States still has considerable resources. Yet it cannot deploy them efficiently because of the emerging social–political ethos.

To theorists from Sun Tzu to Carl von Clausewitz it has been axiomatic that war — or any projection of power — cannot be separated from the ethos of society. They usually require a willingness to make sacrifices and a social cohesiveness that internalises the notion of national interests. Indeed this was the case with all major imperial powers in the 20th century. This sense of social solidarity cannot be created by ideology alone. It requires extensions of the social security net and increased sharing of resources of the upper classes with the lower classes. This was done by both Nazi Germany and Roosevelt America. But the opposite process has taken place in the United States over the last generation. As the standard of living for the majority of Americans has plummeted, social polarisation has increased dramatically. All of this leads to increasing fragmentation and polarisation of American society, which is reflected in what the American mass media has termed a ‘dysfunctional Congress’.

In these circumstances, prolonged conflict is impossible. This explains Obama’s Iran policies. He is plainly realistic and has tried to disentangle the United States from empire, which has become ‘over-stretched’, to use Paul Kennedy’s classic definition. The US decline and possible collapse of the US empire is structural and quite different from the collapse of the Soviet Union, which stemmed from the actions of basically two persons — Mikhail Gorbachev and Boris Yeltsin. While Obama and some segments of the US elite want to disconnect themselves from empire, it will not be an easy transition either for the United States or for its allies or, possibly, for the global community.

The United States’ tilting to Iran will increase the rift between it and Saudi Arabia, Israel and the Gulf states. Each of them will operate without taking into account American interests. Jihadists are likely to be the greatest beneficiaries of this discord. They are already benefiting from it.

Wider repercussions
Perceptions of US weakness in dealing with Iran could have broad global implications. The point here is that the American imperial presence extends globally and the United States is confronted by several rising or re-emerging powers. All of them, sensing the United States’ weakness or what they perceive as the United States’ weakness, could challenge the United States in various parts of the world. As a matter of fact this process has already started. Putin would not, most likely, have entered Ukraine if he had not seen Washington’s reluctance to bomb the Iranian ally/proxy Bashar al-Assad.

Still the major problem could well emerge in Asia. Ukraine is not a NATO member and Putin, anxious to avoid burning the bridges behind him, is unlikely to invade NATO countries, even those with considerable numbers of the ‘Sudetendeutsche’-like ethnic Russians. The story could be different with China. The Chinese elite are much more assertive and clearly believe that a good part of the Pacific Ocean should be dominated by China. Sensing US weakness, China might use its burgeoning power to engage directly in military conflict not just with Vietnam, with which the United States has no formal treaty, but also with Taiwan, Japan, South Korea, the Philippines and other countries in the area. And in such an event the United States would have very limited and quite dangerous options. One would be to negate their obligation completely or engage in quite limited actions that might not lead to success and thus further demonstrate the United States’ weakness and/or unreliability as a partner. The other option would be to engage in full-on conflict, which, even if it were not nuclear, would entail dramatic global changes. In such a situation not just the global environment but also the United States could well experience particular ‘regime change’ and society could be reshaped in ways unthinkable up to now. All of this indicates that the United States’ withdrawal from the world arena has become potentially as dangerous or potentially even more dangerous for both the United States and global community as the United States’ rapid advance after the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991. And Washington’s dealings with Teheran could well be seen in retrospect as the beginning of this dire process.
Making a case for a defence U-turn

Hugh Steadman responds to the defence minister’s invitation to New Zealanders to have a say on defence by proposing a radical shift in approach.

In the May/June issue of NZ International Review (vol 40, no 3), Minister of Defence Gerry Brownlee briefly discussed the impending Defence white paper alongside an advertisement inviting New Zealanders to ‘have their say’. It can be anticipated that developments in defence policy resulting from this process will be no more than incremental. However, could the time now be ripe for a more searching review of New Zealand’s current defence strategy? The late Malcolm Fraser, in his article published in the Review’s March/April issue (vol 40, no 2) argued that the Australian and, by implication, New Zealand governments need to make a U-turn away from a seemingly ever deeper commitment to the Western (read United States) alliance.

At a time when the major Western alliance, to which New Zealand subscribes for its security, is growing increasingly entangled in peace-threatening crises of its own instigation — in the Ukraine, the Middle East and the South China Sea — New Zealanders could perhaps take a deep breath and ask themselves ‘do we really need to go there?’

For those who wished to make submissions, the Ministry of Defence published a series of questions to be answered. These questions provide a useful template for the discussion.

What are the major threats or challenges to New Zealand’s security now and in the future?

The triumph of the Washington-led consensus in the current competition for global dominance is by no means certain. Far more likely is the emergence of a multi-polar world. Those who have risked all by joining the United States in its bid for ‘full spectrum global dominance’ may well find that they, for no gain, have lumbered themselves with a future burden of ill-will from other powerful global players.

Brownlee invites his readers to ask themselves ‘how much we value the existing rules-based system — and, based on this, what role we should play in defending it?’ It is precisely the breakdown of this rules-based system that poses a, if not the, major threat to New Zealand’s security. The problem is that the major players among our ‘allies’ (the United States, NATO, Israel) have a commitment to that system, secured as it is meant to be by international law, only when it suits them. Furthermore, they have the expectation that their allies and fellow-travellers, such as New Zealand, will raise no meaningful objection when their more powerful allies choose to ignore those rules.

As a consequence of the above situation, it is quite probable that New Zealand will find itself dragged into armed conflicts in which its real national interests are either not involved, or in which they are actually more heavily vested in the other side. As a case in point, New Zealand having its economy primarily dependent on one partner, China, while its defence posture is one of alliance to that prime trading partner’s increasingly belligerent military competitor, the United States, is a conflicted policy that would seem bound to lead to grief.

A less immediate threat than involvement in wars not of its own making, but one which could ultimately lead to New Zealand being first swamped by refugees and later becoming uninhabitable, is the global community’s inadequate response to the threat of rapid climate change. It is apparent that the present ‘rules-based system’ is unable to address this situation on the global basis that is called for.

From the above, it can be seen that a major threat to the nation’s security is the apparent failure of successive governments to recognise that New Zealand’s best defence lies not in military alliances with partners often disrespectful of international law, but in rigorous diplomatic action in defence of and towards the further development of that law. The government’s down-grading of the diplomatic service over the past few years and its recent performance on the UN Security Council, where it failed to condemn the Saudi assault on Yemen (thus being seen to condone an egregious breach of international law), were both moves in the wrong direction.

Always in the background is the danger of ‘black swan’ events in the form of a sudden and total breakdown in the world economic order, and/or its supply of fossil fuels, or of a nuclear disaster, whether accidental or intentional. Total economic breakdown does not seem that improbable, given the soaring debt to GDP ratios of many countries in the European Union, Japan and the United States. Panic can set in at any moment. This situation implies not getting further into debt on unnecessary defence expenditure.

What changes in the international environment, including...
The current international system is undergoing rapid changes affecting the balance of power between the major players. The trigger for these changes is the rapid increase in Chinese economic strength. The United States’ policy of isolating Russia from its European neighbours is forcing a new burgeoning alliance and co-operation between Russia and China. Ultimately, this alliance, powered by China’s enormous cash reserves and its investment in the new Silk Road, is likely to lead not only to the demise of the Bretton Woods institutions in their current form but also to the struggling economies of Western Europe weakening their commitment to both Brussels and the Atlantic alliance, as they look to participate in the economic bonanza coming down the silken track.

As the United States pivots its resources and attention towards preventing the above scenario through the attempted isolation and then destabilisation of Russia and the arduous containment of China, its Middle Eastern policy is undergoing a dramatic shift. No longer dependent on Middle East oil supplies and having, from the point of view of Israel and that of its allies in the American establishment, ‘successfully’ set in train the Balkanisation of the Middle East, the region is to be left, armed to the teeth with American weaponry, to find its own ‘balance of power’. With Israel, Saudi Arabia, Turkey and Iran being invited to partake in a Mexican stand-off, and acute water shortages looming, the Middle East will become a hotbed of failed states and resentful sectarian terrorism — and ground zero for a not looming, the Middle East will become a hotbed of failed states and resentful sectarian terrorism — and ground zero for a not inconceivable nuclear war.

Consequent upon the above, there is a strong possibility of a major interruption in New Zealand’s access to fossil fuels. New Zealand’s future long-term security needs would be better met by subsidising the move away from fossil fuel dependence than by military intervention in conflict zones that are not existentially critical.

As the world fills with refugees from states failing due to climate change, proxy resource wars being waged by the great powers and poverty trapped population growth, unrestrained by a growing wealth factor, New Zealand’s defence forces should be deployed for home defence.

Neutrality, combined with universal national service, along the Swiss model, would seem the sensible option. Given its contiguous land frontiers, the Swiss defence forces are expensively structured to fight conventional wars. New Zealand’s would need only to be structured to demonstrate to a potential sea-invasion force that, should its vessels survive New Zealand’s initial conventional defence, the casualties it would subsequently suffer in a prolonged guerrilla war would be intolerably high.

What are the emerging security challenges that New Zealand is likely to face in its immediate territory, including its exclusive economic zone, continental shelf, the territory of the realm nations and the Ross Dependency?

Assuming that a prudently governed New Zealand avoids being dragged into overseas wars of others’ instigation, and setting aside black swan events, for which forward planning is nigh impossible, rapid climate change has to be the major challenge. Terrorism is only a challenge if the government insists on pandering to its ‘natural allies’ and participating in Islam’s civil war. Given its low population and its wealth of natural resources, New Zealand’s food security should be guaranteed, despite the first two or three degrees of global warming. That is provided that a displaced population of Australia, further forward in the climate change firing-line than New Zealanders, does not insist on its right to clamour on board and share the rations!

The major problems will come later — maybe in two or three decades’ time. At this point two major events have the possibility of impacting our shores. The first is a massive flow of refu-
The other challenge will come when the Antarctic ice cap melts and the big lolly-scramble for its resources starts among the, by then, resource starved and powerful nations of the northern hemisphere. Under these circumstances, New Zealand would be ill-advised to follow Australia in trying to keep hold of its territorial stake in Antarctica. Both New Zealand and Australia would simply get smashed aside in any such attempt. Instead, there should be a tidy living to be made as a transport café and service centre, supplying the hostile fleets of would be exploiters, as they head down that way. (This is, of course, conditional upon its defence arrangements being sufficient to impress the travellers that New Zealand would not be worth the hassle of an attempted occupation.]

**How should the government prioritise the Defence Force’s efforts between ensuring New Zealand is secure, supporting the security and stability of our friends, partners and our ally Australia, and contributing to international peace and security globally?**

The first priority has to be to ensure the security of the New Zealand homeland and those for whose protection it is directly responsible. After that is done to the best of its abilities, New Zealand can best contribute to global peace and security on the diplomatic front — by incessant lobbying and standing up for changes in the UN constitution and the rule of international law under all circumstances. In the present, anarchic system of fully-sovereign independent states, in which the individual players’ alliances and policies are in a constant state of flux, New Zealand should avoid the mistake of relying on the permanence of friendships. The government should look after New Zealand’s national interest and not be gulled into prioritising those of other nations such as Australia, or, as it has recently, of the United States and United Kingdom in Iraq.

Nothing can be done to help Australia other than the offering of sound advice (which almost certainly will go unheeded) while it pursues its current foreign policy of aggravating its Islamic neighbours and surrendering its sovereignty to the Pentagon. Australia and New Zealand might be able to co-operate in guarding their mutual sea space, in shared training facilities and in making arrangements for their citizens to seamlessly serve in the other’s armed forces, but in little else.

Only if Australian foreign and defence policies undergo a significant reappraisal should there be room for additional military co-operation. The sad fact is that if Australia manages, through a misguided foreign policy, to so aggravate Indonesia and/or other Asian nations that it gets itself invaded, such a war would be highly likely to spill-over onto New Zealand shores. Under such circumstances, at current levels of manpower and funding, there is no way that New Zealand should risk committing its scant forces to Australia’s defence. As things stand, Australian foreign policy seems based on a belief that it can risk affronting other nations with impunity, as the United States will always be there to come to its defence. New Zealand should hope that Australia’s gamble pays off — but should itself refrain from taking a similar gamble.

**What capabilities does the Defence Force need to carry out its roles effectively, now and in the future?**

Given the change in posture advocated in this article, the primary role of the New Zealand Defence Force will be to provide basic and advanced infantry training for a conscripted guerrilla army; with procurement and stockpiling of equipment to match. Basically, such a defensive posture should not be costed according to the criteria applied to current conventional defence budgets. Expenditure could be adjusted to fit whatever budget was allocated, according to how many of the age catchment were actually called forward; the duration of the call-up term; the frequency with which reservists were called back for top-up training, and how much they were paid.

Not only would the hardware requirements demanded by the present conventional and overseas interoperability posture be reduced (at least until such time as the threat situation deteriorates further) but also there would be significant savings to be offset against the budgets of other ministries. Unemployment would be reduced; the crimes of bored-youth would be reduced; the nation’s fitness and long-term healthiness would be increased. Importantly, given the increases in multicultural migration and the widening of social divisions between New Zealanders, which will follow on from the current rapid growth in wealth inequality, the experience of shared national service would increase social cohesion — or at least slow down the emergence of social stratification in which the parties drift ever further apart. In an emerging crisis, an undivided nation, which can rely on itself for its defence, rather than be dependent on others, will benefit from increased self-confidence and morale.

Another way of looking at the proposal’s feasibility, and asking whether it would place too heavy a strain on New Zealand society, would be to look at Israel. New Zealand, with its GDP of $200 billion and a population of around five million, currently supports 9000 regular defence personnel and 2000 reservists. With a population of eight million, a GDP of $290 billion and a per capita GDP $7000 less than New Zealand’s, Israel supports full conscription: 160,000 regular forces and 630,000 well trained reservists. It has developed a significant nuclear warfare capacity, a most powerful air force and navy, which together with the army conduct regular mobilisations and warlike operations on land, sea and air. Israel’s air force maintains more than 600 modern aircraft, its navy six submarines, 48 patrol boats, eight missile boats and three corvettes. Its army is equipped with 4000 modern tanks and about 10,000 other armoured fighting vehicles. Of all the above accoutrements of an effective defence policy, the only thing that New Zealand would be called on to match would be the ratio of reserve forces to overall population.

A large force of several hundred thousand conscripted reservists trained in guerrilla warfare will also be well-equipped to provide emergency response to civil disasters at home and overseas and to offer the government the option to deploy peacekeeping/observer personnel on UN secondment overseas, should it so wish.

In addition to the implementation of the fundamental strategy outlined above, New Zealand forces will be required to maintain and conduct advanced aerial reconnaissance and fisheries protection functions. The defence force does not need armoured fighting vehicles, nor does it need frigates for the defence of other nations’ aircraft-carriers against submarines. What they will need, to be phased in as the developing global crisis justifies it, is both land and sea-based surface-to-surface missiles and patrol vessels equipped with up-to-date armaments, including possibly mine-laying capabilities.

Finally a GCSB capacity for New Zealand’s own intelligence...
and cyber defence purposes should be retained and alongside it (a MFAT responsibility?) a foreign, office-based, intelligence service capable of monitoring and analysing the vast array of information openly available on the internet.

The Ministry of Defence’s request for submissions also had space for additional comments. Recent history highlights one aspect of defence policy calling for urgent review, irrespective of what other changes might, or might not, take place under the current review. There needs to be some agreed procedure for arriving at a national consensus before New Zealand armed forces are committed to warlike operations. The case of the recent entry into the Iraqi civil war is a case in point.

There were a total of 4,753,229 constituency and party votes cast in the 2014 general election; 2,257,755 (47 per cent) of these were cast for the ACT and National parties. The other parties opposed the deployment. Furthermore, while some of the voters for the other parties might well have been in favour of deployment, one can assume that many of those who voted for National were not.

Immediately prior to the election, the prime minister announced that the option to enter into the Middle East war was not on the table. Then, within a week or two of its re-election, it became clear from announcements made in Washington and from PR prepping of New Zealand public opinion, that his new government fully intended to enter the war. Given the lack of any developments in the ISIS situation on the ground in the interim, it is not improbable that this intention was known to senior members of the National Cabinet at the time of the prime minister’s pre-election announcement of neutrality. Many voters would have been misled into giving their vote to National in the belief that their vote could not lead to their country’s joining the United States and the United Kingdom in their feeble attempt to mop up the mess of their own creation.

There was certainly no popular mandate for this deployment. New Zealand troops have been inserted into a chaotic and potentially lethal situation with no clear indication that they have the support of the majority of their fellow countrymen. This is not a situation which is fair to the personnel involved. Constitutional procedures should be established to ensure it does not happen in the future.

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In the absence of a cogent national security strategy, it is considered that New Zealand faces almost no risk of an act of international aggression against its territorial integrity, at least to 2040. Indeed, for most New Zealanders a greater risk to national security is posed by the unpredictability of a catastrophic hydrological, geological or geo-physical event. As a result, it is generally perceived that New Zealand enjoys a relatively benign environment. However, this perception engenders ignorance of a greater concern facing the nation: the fragility of New Zealand’s economic security.

Because of New Zealand’s fertile soil, sophisticated farming methods and advanced technology, agricultural commodities make up approximately 50 per cent of all exports, including dairy products, of which it is one of the top five exporters. These essentially ‘rural’ exports are complemented by manufacturing, the service sector and high-tech capabilities. As New Zealand does not have a sufficiently broad manufacturing and technology base to sustain the efficiency and sophistication that underpins the agricultural sector, machinery and equipment, vehicles and aircraft, petroleum, electronics, textiles and plastics dominate its imports. This finely balanced economic model inevitably leaves New Zealand exposed to the caprices of its trading partners. Moreover, the control that can be exerted over factors that may disturb the balance is limited.

The New Zealand government has recognised the importance of bio-security, food safety measures and the protection and maintenance of New Zealand’s ‘clean-green’ environment — security issues that can be addressed domestically.1 Looking beyond national borders, the 2011 National Security System highlights the criticality of very long supply lines, reliable overseas sources, international transportation and supply line security; the impact of instability and conflict upon international trade and economic linkages; and peace and security in the Asia–Pacific region from whence New Zealand derives significant economic benefits. To mitigate the risks associated with these factors, in whole or in part, there is an imperative upon the government proactively to broaden the nation’s trading base. Diplomatic and trade agreements have been concluded or are under negotiation with parties as diverse as ASEAN and Russia–Belarus–Kazakhstan. Moreover, in April 2013, it was reported that China had overtaken Australia as New Zealand’s most lucrative export market for goods traded, albeit Australia remaining the largest export market for goods and services.

So fundamental is China to New Zealand’s economic wellbeing and prosperity that it is included in a number of MFAT developed ‘NZ Inc Strategies’.2 The purpose of the strategies is to: [Strengthen] New Zealand’s economic, political and security relationships with key international partners. They target countries and regions where… there is potential for significant growth. The strategies look at the future possibilities in these markets over the next 10–15 years then set ambitious, five-year goals, as well as the steps… to achieve them.
**Key role**

The key goals of the NZ Inc Strategy for China include ‘building a strong and resilient political relationship’. It is assessed that the benefits of this relationship will encompass an enhanced level of engagement; engagement that axiomatically provides more opportunity for investment and market expansion. Building high-level relationships and maximising areas of co-operation between security and law enforcement agencies in each country underpin this goal.

The establishment and development of relations with China is indicative of New Zealand’s egalitarian approach to international relations. By dint of shared historical experiences, Australia is New Zealand’s closest and most important security partner. But considerable progress has been made in reinforcing relations between New Zealand and the United States with the signing of the Wellington (2010) and Washington (2012) declarations that set out areas of closer bilateral defence and security co-operation based upon common interests in countering terrorism and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction in Asia–Pacific and beyond. As a region beset by strategic interests and objectives it is perhaps inevitable that two or more of New Zealand’s trade and/or security partners will be drawn into competition or conflict in Asia–Pacific. At this juncture the government must decide upon the best course of action to take for New Zealand. Ostensibly, decisions will be driven by diplomatic exigencies. But dig deeper and the core motivation is unadorned. To misquote President Clinton, ‘It’s about the economy, stupid’. The balance of the economy and sheer market forces compel the government to adopt a diplomatic stance that poses the least possible risk to continued investment in the nation and that does not jeopardise trade agreements or exports.

This predicament does not, however, come without potential consequences. For example, if the government strikes a compromise between competing partners in order to protect New Zealand’s interests, will it harm the nation’s credibility within the international community or will it be viewed as a manifestation of realpolitik in its truest sense? Further, if a partner nation calls for support from New Zealand that transcends diplomacy to military co-operation, to what extent can the government afford to commit the limited capabilities of the NZDF in shaping its response?

**Honest broker**

Setting aside the current seat on the UN Security Council, only the most idiosyncratic commentator would claim that New Zealand exerts substantial influence on the global stage. By reason of its membership of the Five Eyes community, it is in a position to exert some degree of soft influence on major powers, including the United States. The counterpoint to this claim, however, is that there is a price to be paid for being a member of the club. New Zealand must provide in order to receive, for example, to facilitate ‘valuable access [to the South Pacific] not otherwise available to satisfy US intelligence requirement[s]’.

Regionally, New Zealand is a long-standing dialogue partner of ASEAN, with which it actively engages across a broad range of political-security, economic, social-cultural and development issues and initiatives. Such is the importance of ASEAN that New Zealand has appointed an ambassador to the association, distinct from the ambassador to Indonesia. New Zealand is also a founder member of the Pacific Islands Forum, whose goals include the stimulation of economic growth and the enhancement of political governance and security for the region. And, of course, New Zealand is a member of the Commonwealth. Nevertheless, any pragmatic assessment of global influence would place New Zealand amongst the ‘supporting cast’ of nations.

As a result, to remain relevant within the international community New Zealand has had to forge a role for itself. Much has been made of the decision to go ‘nuclear-free’ and not to join the US-led coalition in Iraq in 2003, decisions that were indicative of a certain objectivity in foreign policy terms. Indeed Prime Minister Key chose to capitalise upon this perception during the selection process for the UN Security Council, claiming ‘We’re playing it the old-fashioned way, which is we’re a good, honest broker, [with] sound independent foreign policy and we’re worth voting for’.

**Detractors’ view**

Detractors would assert, however, that the use of the ‘honest broker’ tag has a more Machiavellian purpose. It is used to bring society together during difficult times; it facilitates the expansion of regional influence by presenting New Zealand as more sympathetic than the major powers; and it can partly compensate for military weaknesses by appearing more ‘moral’ than its regional rivals. Moreover, the Opposition has asserted that exactly because New Zealand has a reputation as an honest broker it should show greater leadership, particularly in relation to matters of international peace and security.

Herein lies the predicament for the New Zealand government. To what extent can it demonstrate genuine leadership on the global stage without endangering the international relationships upon which the nation depends for its economic prosperity and security? For example, is the government prepared to confront a significant trading partner in the Security Council? Furthermore, what contingencies are in place if the government’s decisions or actions are perceived as provocative or, conversely, mollification?

To provide some context, consider the complex situation in the South China Sea. China is reported to have constructed approximately 2000 acres of artificial islands using coral reefs as foundations. The work has been on-going for some years, but a dramatic increase in tempo has occurred since the beginning of 2015. The official Chinese explanation for the construction work was mollification?

[O]ptimizing their functions, improving the living and working conditions of personnel stationed there, better safeguarding territorial sovereignty and maritime rights and interests, as well as better performing China’s international responsibility and obligation in maritime search and rescue, disaster prevention and mitigation, marine science and research, meteorological observation, environmental protection, navigation safety, fishery production service and other areas.

**Fervent opposition**

This standpoint is fervently opposed by the ASEAN states and others that have their own, conflicting, territorial claims over the reefs and islands and the natural resources contained within the waters and below the ocean floor. Such is the antipathy in the region that the United States has increased its military presence, including enhanced joint exercises with the Philippines and over-
flights of the contested areas. In April, President Obama raised the temperature in the region still further by publically rebuking China for its actions:

Where we get concerned with China is where it is not necessarily abiding by international norms and rules and is using its sheer size and muscle to force countries into subordinate positions…. We think this can be solved diplomatically, but just because the Philippines or Vietnam are not as large as China doesn’t mean that they can just be elbowed aside.8

Thus, New Zealand is faced with a complex situation involving the majority of its Asia–Pacific trading partners and the ‘status quo’ power with which the government is trying to cement good relations. As a diplomatic impasse begins to develop it is conceivable that a minor skirmish could quickly spiral out of control, resulting in a military clash of some significance. In such circumstances, the New Zealand government might be tempted to exercise the self-proclaimed status as an honest broker by acting as an interlocutor. This, however, has the potential to alienate sensibilities because of China’s declared non-interventionist approach to all issues of sovereignty. Moreover, if China perceived New Zealand to be aligned with the United States with regard to the perceived ‘rebalancing’ of the region, the potential for a delterious effect upon Sino-New Zealand relations is exacerbated. The dichotomous alternative is for the government to reject the United States if it makes overtures to New Zealand for support in constraining China’s advance across and through the Pacific. This could be portrayed as a manifestation of an independent foreign policy that reflects the values and morals of New Zealand. But in the context of a fickle administration and an increasingly inward-looking Congress, one has to question whether the potential repercussions of snubbing the United States, in terms of trade agreements and capability support to the New Zealand Defence Force, is worth the point of principle.

Well-regarded commentators have asserted that the New Zealand government should be more vocal with regard to the South China Sea and other regional issues, irrespective of the potential implications.9 By adopting an objective approach to the application and interpretation of operative international conventions, New Zealand could avoid ‘taking sides’ whilst parenthetically reinforcing its status as an honest broker. This is a rational call for decisiveness in the development of international relationships. However, as is alluded to, the New Zealand government appears reluctant to do or say anything that might offend China or indeed the United States. It has adopted a ‘head-down’ approach. As such, it appears that the yearning for economic security has had a paralytic effect upon New Zealand’s diplomatic endeavours, an effect that, paradoxically, may cause the greatest harm to New Zealand’s credibility amongst its regional partners and international allies.

Limited capability

Somewhat in keeping with the honest broker approach to international relations, the NZDF is often described as ‘punching above its weight’. As a testament to the professionalism and efforts of the approximately 14,000 men and women serving the nation and the Crown, this portrayal is entirely apt. Ne’er be the day that individual sailors, soldiers, airmen and civilians are criticised in the name of defence. Nevertheless, the simple fact remains that the NZDF is expected to do a great deal with comparatively little.

The Defence White Paper 2015 Public Consultation Paper sets out the primary role of the NZDF as securing the nation’s territory and resources and protecting its citizens from external military threats. As an island nation with one of the largest exclusive economic zones in the world and an area of ocean twenty times the size of its land mass, the capabilities and materiel required to achieve these objectives should not be under-estimated. In addition, the government envisages the NZDF being used in a number of extra-territorial contingencies, including a direct attack on Australia (with approximately 58,000 regular and approximately 44,000 reserve personnel, capital ships, battle tanks and fast jets), as part of collective action in support of a threatened member of the Pacific Islands Forum, in accordance with New Zealand’s obligations under the Five Power Defence Arrangements or as mandated or requested by the United Nations or an individual government. And the list goes on… with the NZDF expected to be a mainstay in ‘whole of government’ responses to a range of domestic contingencies of security, resilience and prosperity.

In his ministerial foreword to the Public Consultation Paper, Gerry Brownlee explains the rationale for this commitment: to protect the rules-based international order from which New Zealand benefits and which is coming under ‘increasing pressure’. In accountability terms there is logic to this approach. If New Zealand is desirous of peace and stability, particularly within its major trading region, it must expect to contribute to collective security efforts. However, one must but wonder about the justification for the sheer scale and range of the stated tasks for the NZDF. In the absence of a comprehensive national security strategy, one might be tempted to presume that the tasks are postulated on the premise that to make some contribution, however small, is better than making no contribution at all. After all, to do nothing is to be regarded as a ‘bludger’, which is the antithesis of the nation’s collective psyche. Furthermore, while New Zealand continues to be governed in a manner that resonates with the stereotypical ‘Kiwi bloke’, there is little to discourage this presumption. As a result, it seems highly likely that NZDF personnel will continue to be deployed to a variety of operations across a range of theatres that far exceed New Zealand’s natural sphere of interest and influence.
Commitment manifestation

From a doctrinal perspective, deployments of this kind could be cynically described as ‘penny-packets’ with limited utility and success (with some notable exceptions). But, when viewed through the lens of international diplomacy, the importance of the deployments extend beyond simple numbers. To deploy military personnel to the Pacific, Iraq or beyond is a physical manifestation of New Zealand’s commitment to a particular issue, eventually or nation. The fact that New Zealand has so few deployable personnel and limited capabilities accentuates rather than diminishes the weight of that commitment. Thus whilst sixteen NZDF trainers may not make a significant difference to the overall efficacy of the Iraqi Army, the mere fact that those personnel are present and placing themselves in harm’s way will not have gone unnoticed. The reciprocal of one of the supporting cast of nations making a contribution, any contribution, is enhanced respect, fewer impediments to dialogue and an increased willingness to work with an honest broker.

This positivity should not, however, be used to deflect from the aching reality of New Zealand’s defence capabilities. If it were compelled to operate in isolation, the NZDF would struggle to achieve its principle objective of ‘securing the nation’s territory and resources and to protect its citizens from external military threats’. It is quite simply under-manned and under-equipped to resist a determined, sustained act of aggression. In addition, if capabilities were committed to a ‘foreign’ small-scale conflict, one has to question what assets and capabilities would be available to respond to a coincidental regional low-intensity event or a significant natural disaster?

Certain commentators posit a radical overhaul and upscaling of the NZDF. Others assert that a comprehensive rethink of the concept and objectives of national security is required that might result in a reduction in the size of the NZDF. This author is of the opinion that with regard to conceptual thinking about security and defence, and the shape of future procurement programmes, a greater emphasis must be put upon ensuring that the NZDF can deliver a significant contribution to the nation’s economic security. The government must go beyond ambiguous statements about ‘protecting resources’. It must provide the NZDF with suitable capabilities that are both robust and have sufficient redundancy to achieve the required effect. Crucially, the capabilities must be supported by unambiguous government policy that enables and encourages positive action to be taken.

In the necessary development of a comprehensive national security strategy, the prioritisation of this strategic objective may result in compensating reductions; certain other objectives will have to be conceded. However, in the absence of significant increases in the capability budget in order to allow the NZDF to operate more effectively, it is an unavoidable consequence. Paradoxically, many New Zealanders may welcome the re-prioritisation of strategic objectives, especially if the change is communicated and interpreted as a physical manifestation of protecting New Zealand. It is certainly not something to be feared because, as this article has sought to demonstrate, New Zealand’s greatest vulnerability is its economic security. Therefore, the government should be focusing all of its diplomatic efforts and defence capabilities upon the preservation of this security, even if to do so comes at a cost to its status as an honest broker.

NOTES

1. The 2013 contamination of milk powder that led to a Chinese ban on New Zealand milk products placed at risk an estimated NZ$9.4 billion dairy trade. The March 2015 threat to poison infant milk products caused the New Zealand dollar to weaken against all major currencies, albeit temporarily.
2. New Zealand’s other most significant trading partners are the United States, Japan and South Korea. MFAT has developed a strategy for Australia and the ASEAN. A strategy for the United States is under development.
‘Naturally he [Kirk] was concerned about disorder and probable violence, and could see that if he stopped the tour he could lose the next election. But the tour did not fit with his view of what New Zealand should do in the world, and what its standing would be should it proceed, and that was his paramount motivation.’ (Frank Corner, 1998)

‘we all realised that on matters of race, Kirk was the most radical in Caucus, bar none. He had contempt for anyone or any country that differentiated between men on the basis of their skin colour.’ (Michael Bassett, 1976)

From his first day as prime minister-elect the Springbok tour decision was an immediate priority for Norman Kirk. Corner is pitch perfect in saying that Kirk’s big picture aspirations meant the decision, whatever it was, would deeply colour Kirk’s prime ministerial global diplomacy.

Kirk was primarily a problem solver. He coupled that with a deep humanitarianism and a vision for New Zealand’s best international standing, the Kirk Brand — a progressive small state, with a deep internationalism central to our national identity. The success of the Springbok tour ‘postponement’ decision enabled Kirk to make a flying start to his global diplomacy.

Bassett’s realisation came following an urgent Caucus meeting called on the evening of 15 February 1973, the new Parliament having formally opened earlier that day. The forthcoming Springbok tour was the Caucus’ sole topic. The meeting had been forced by Bassett and several other brand-new MPs. Margaret Hayward records that they doubted Kirk’s will to stop the tour, which provoked Kirk. But Bassett and his Caucus colleagues became spectators as Kirk worked through the process of shutting down the tour. His performance in doing so highlights how at critical times it is a prime minister who is, by far, the most pervasive player in our major global diplomacy.

The new Labour MPs’ initiative highlighted the wide gap between the prime minister and his parliamentary team. Even his long-time senior colleagues knew Kirk so little they lacked the confidence he would put a finish to the Springbok tour. Hayward encapsulates the key events that were to unfold as he did so, leaving others to connect the dots. That is now possible. Of the many recollections published, those of the Reverend Bob Scott, Trevor Richards, Tom Newnham, Terry McLean, Alex Veysey, Ron Palenski, Frank Corner and Malcolm Templeton shed the most light.

Anti-apartheid credentials
Kirk was the first of New Zealand’s post-1945 prime ministers to comprehend the ‘winds of change’ Harold Macmillan had acknowledged in February 1960 that were to engulf the global landscape as long as the apartheid regime was entrenched in South Africa.

Ahead of his prime ministership, Kirk had built up a substantial record for opposing the South African apartheid regime. He was one of the handful of Labour MPs who publicly supported the ‘No Maori No Tour’ opposition to the 1960 All Black tour of South Africa.

In the next twelve years Kirk made numerous representations to the South Africans, often petitioning their Wellington-based consul-general, protesting specific actions. Hayward records such an instance in 1971 when the Anglican dean of Johannesburg, Gonville Aubrey ffrench-Beytagh, was tried under the Terrorism Act and sentenced to five years’ imprisonment.6 Most telling were the statements Kirk made in London in January 1968 and April 1971. These reveal Kirk’s determination

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Norman Kirk’s requiring the New Zealand Rugby Football Union to ‘conditionally postpone’ the 1973 Springbok tour of New Zealand is the superlative example of Kirk’s Ernest Bevin-style attributes. Ensuring that the whites-only Springboks did not visit New Zealand was the defining moment that began his year of global diplomacy. He set the standard for New Zealand as a good international citizen. Kirk’s skills in the lead up to the 10 April letter to the Rugby Union was that prime minister at his finest, enabling a controversial decision to come to pass that allowed him to strive for his big picture aspirations beyond New Zealand.
to ensure there would be no tour if he was prime minister in 1973. On the latter occasion Kirk said that if he was the prime minister he would ‘if need be’ advise the New Zealand Rugby Union on aspects of the Springbok tour. This should be read in the context of Harold Wilson’s May 1970 advice to the MCC to call off the South African cricket tour of England. Kirk was putting his stake in place for his international pals to measure him by later.7

Kirk followed closely events in Britain and Australia when the Springboks had toured in 1969 and 1971, with considerable disruption by anti-apartheid protestors. The cancellation of the South African cricketers’ tour to Britain in mid-1970 was another instance, complicated by the British going to the polls on 19 June. The 1970 Commonwealth Games, held in Edinburgh later in the year, had been subjected to a boycott, which was stood down when the cricket tour was called off.

Gaining power
Kirk knew that to make a difference he had first to get Labour into government. He began well in early 1972 challenging the credibility of the new prime minister, Jack Marshall, who, within days of replacing Keith Holyoake, had ditched the prudent approach on sporting links with South Africa that Holyoake had exhibited for the previous twelve years. Marshall pitched his reputation on ‘building bridges’ with the South Africans. It was to be a failed initiative, collapsing in early September following the South Africans not playing ball by refusing to countenance multi-racial trials.8

At the general election in November 1972, Kirk successfully shut-down the tour as a campaign issue. Playing the long game, he astutely denied Marshall the ammunition that Labour might stop the forthcoming Springbok tour — Marshall saw rugby with South Africa as a vote winner for National. Kirk had been seared in 1966 in his first election campaign as Labour’s leader when he discovered that forthrightly opposing the Vietnam War was electorally catastrophic to Labour’s prospects. He was not going to repeat that mistake by campaigning forthrightly to stop the tour. That, in turn, had foxed many more than Bassett and his fellow parliamentary newcomers — all had come to doubt Kirk’s sincerity that once prime minister he would ensure the tour did not happen.

Ahead of the 1972 general election Kirk never formally pledged his party would not permit politics to intrude into sport. The only place where a formal pledge had authority would have been the Labour Party’s 1972 election manifesto. There was no reference to the tour in it. Many in the pro-tour camp tried to portray Kirk as having done what they wanted. But he had not. Jack Marshall sought to catch him, but was seriously stymied in early September when the South African prime minister, Vorster, made clear there would be no multi-racial trials. On 4 September Kirk issued a press release that scathingly demolished Marshall’s ‘building bridges’ stance. At the end of the statement Kirk asserted that ‘Labour’s policy clearly involved complete official disassociation with the tour’. Six weeks later, as the election campaign began, Kirk informed the anti-apartheid movement that the 4 September press release was Labour’s ‘stand’.9

Process initiated
Within days of becoming prime minister Kirk began the process of stopping the tour, not knowing with surety that he would succeed without civil disturbances disrupting New Zealand. On 11 December Kirk informed George Laking, the about to retire secretary of foreign affairs, that he expected the tour would not take place. Kirk was counting on the South African prime minister to intervene and cancel the Springboks visit to New Zealand.10

Kirk’s hand was already being forced by Gough Whitlam’s edict on 8 December that South African sports people were henceforth banned from playing in Australia and from transiting Australia to play elsewhere. Whitlam was then in his initial week as Australia’s prime minister and on the same day made pub-
lic that his first overseas travel as prime minister would be to New Zealand to meet Kirk in late January 1973.

While still prime minister-elect, Kirk found his two most trusted and able lieutenants for getting through the maze. He was acquainted with both, but had not worked closely with either prior to becoming prime minister. He correctly assessed that his most senior foreign policy officials — Frank Corner (the secretary of foreign affairs and head of the Prime Minister’s Department) and Malcolm Templeton (Corner’s number two in both roles) — were the right advisers for the task.

The two officials knew that this moment would become legendary if they succeeded, particularly were it to be with aplomb (as it turned out they were right). Templeton was deeply familiar with the issue as he had been fully engaged through 1972 advising Marshall on his ‘building bridges’ initiative. Corner delegated to Templeton initially as he had been out of New Zealand for the previous decade and his immediate priority for Kirk was crafting his first foreign policy statements. By 10 April it was Corner who did the final touches with Kirk on the announcement that the government required the rugby union to ‘conditionally postpone’ the tour.

**Formidable trio**

This trio became formidable — a rare moment when a prime minister and top officials marched together in tune, accomplishing results that saw New Zealand stand tall globally. Corner and Templeton were already working furiously for Kirk as events unfolded publicly from 23 January 1973 — when Kirk began the process of engaging the leadership of the New Zealand Rugby Football Union in a largely one-sided dialogue — until 10 April, when Kirk announced the postponement.

The cuts and thrusts of Kirk and the counter moves the Rugby Union leadership made as they feinted to escape calling off the tour is told by Templeton in a chapter in his 1998 book *Human Rights and Sporting Contacts: New Zealand Attitudes to Race Relations in South Africa 1921–94.* Templeton gives few clues in the book to his own pivotal role. His fingerprints are clearly seen in official documents at Archives New Zealand — he was signing off the principal papers that the foreign ministry prepared for Kirk — and more so in his own papers at the Alexander Turnbull Library. Corner and Templeton shadowed Kirk until the 10 April ‘ postponement’ and then continued to cover Kirk’s back. In September 1973 Templeton went to the United Nations in New York to lead the New Zealand offensive in that critical forum.

The most perceptive commentary on Kirk’s performance in shutting down the tour was written immediately following the 10 April announcement. Jim Eagles and Colin James assessed Kirk’s initial four months as prime minister in the final chapter of their *The Making of a New Zealand Prime Minister (1973).* Their insight conveys how the contemporary scene appeared:

*Kirk’s biggest test was the decision about the South African tour. There he showed no compunction in abandoning an election promise of non-interference. Arguing that new information — on intended boycotts of the 1974 Commonwealth Games in Christchurch by African and some other states and on the growing prospect of violence — had made him radically rethink his attitude, he let it be known in no uncertain terms that he wanted the tour called off, hinting he might call it off himself if necessary. Kirk had skilfully prepared the ground for the change and then continued his argument so long, leading step by step towards the tour’s cancellation that, by the time it came, the decision no longer had the impact it would have had if he had made the decision flatly. People had grown to accept its inevitability. But they were probably not convinced of Kirk’s original sincerity. If he had honestly changed his mind because of the ‘new’ information, then he appears to have been rather naïve before the election to have believed that violence and the boycott were sufficiently an issue. If this is not the case, then one must wonder whether in fact he contemplated before the election the possibility of calling off the tour. Whether it was a misreading of the situation or a Machiavellian way of defusing an election issue must remain a moot point. Nevertheless, he must at least be given the credit for effecting an unpopular decision.*

This commentary illustrates Kirk’s leadership was very much in the Ernest Bevin tradition by which, I have previously suggested, Kirk can best be measured. And, thus, it is apparent that Kirk had long intened there would not be Springboks playing in New Zealand in 1973 if the South Africans insisted on a whites-only XV.

The passage of time has not revealed more distilled assessments. David Grant’s recent account in *The Mighty Totara: The Life and Times of Norman Kirk (2014)* does Kirk a disservice. His account of Kirk’s handling of the tour decision is of a man barely recognisable for the person who kept asking me questions after we first started talking world affairs at Queen’s Birthday weekend in 1964. The Kirk I observed for the next eight years left me sure that when Labour won the 1972 election there would be no tour.

**Serious diplomacy**

With the tour postponed Kirk began his serious global diplomacy: his attendance weeks later at the South Pacific Forum, followed three months later at the Commonwealth leaders’ gathering in Canada and another month on addressing the UN General Assembly and meeting President Richard Nixon (and Henry Kissinger, then Nixon’s national security adviser and secretary of state) at the White House. Kirk capped off his 1973 global diplomacy with the visit to Canberra in November followed by commencing a long journey through South-east and South Asia in late December and well into January. His finales in 1974 were the Commonwealth Games in Christchurch, chairing the first ANZUS Council meeting since he and Whitlam came to power, the visit to New Zealand by Julius Nyerere and travelling to the late March South Pacific Forum in Rarotonga. Then his day was done as his health collapsed.

Throughout his year of global diplomacy the Springbok tour
decision registered as a decisive marker — all his interlocutors were impressed by the skill he had shown getting such a handsomely conclusion. It had marked out Kirk as outstanding — his was a decision that far out reached Harold Wilson’s on the South African cricket tour in 1970 and Gough Whitlam’s December 1972 edict that South Africa’s sportspeople were banned from Australia or transiting. Rugby in New Zealand was globally the big one for the apartheid regime’s opponents to celebrate. Kirk had played hard, including taking no prisoners with the anti-apartheid side. In particular he kept Trevor Richards in his sights, rebukiing him whenever the latter upped the rhetoric. Kirk had measured Richards, reckoning he could stand the heat, which was invaluable when, if warranted, Kirk turned the heat on the pro-tour movement. Once the decision was done Kirk and Richards forged a healthy mutual respect, with some amiability. Kirk initiated the understanding in a disarming way.

**Decision’s legacy**

Kirk’s Springbok tour decision is among a handful of truly impressive ‘captain’s calls’ that New Zealand prime ministers have made since 1945. Helen Clark’s March 2003 ‘NO’ to joining the international coalition that militarily intervened in Iraq is in the same league. David Lange’s most important ‘captain’s call’ was his least known global diplomacy initiative — the strong and considerable support that secured the United Nations reinscription of New Caledonia. It was a move that enhanced his legacy much more globally than at home. Muldoon’s several ‘captain’s calls’ prompted New Zealand’s international credibility to be downgraded.

Kirk’s global stature is wonderfully measured by a rarity — a glowing testimonial from Henry Kissinger. Kissinger and Kirk had met twice, both times on 27 September 1973 at the White House when Kissinger had had to listen to Kirk and President Nixon discuss global grand strategy. Kissinger’s message on Kirk’s death was

> All of us shall greatly miss the energy and vision of a leader whom we much admired. He was one of America’s most valued and respected friends. I am certain, however, that the spirit and substance of his work shall endure.

**NOTES**


5. Ibid., pp.113–18, 120, 122–6.

6. Ibid., p.2. As an 18-year old ffrench-Beytagh had a year boarding at Waitaki Boys High School, Oamaru.


16. The file ‘Overseas Messages of Condolence’ (R24081911) in the Kirk Papers at Archives New Zealand has a copy; along with many other messages, of which Pierre Trudeau and Gough Whitlam provided fine statements. Other impressive messages were from Michael Somare, Ratu Sir Kamisese Mara, Indira Gandhi, Sheik Mujibar Rahman and the Queen.

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**NEW PUBLICATION**

*The Arctic and Antarctica Differing Currents of Change*

*Edited by Peter Kennedy*

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HE Wang Lutong is China’s ambassador in New Zealand.

China and New Zealand both made significant contributions to the global war against fascism. Despite the fact that New Zealand’s main forces were deployed in Europe, thousands of New Zealand soldiers also fought valiantly in the Pacific. The 3rd Division of the 2nd New Zealand Expeditionary Force and parts of both the Royal New Zealand Navy and the Royal New Zealand Air Force fought heroic battles on tropical islands, enduring harsh conditions. Proportionally, New Zealand had more casualties than any other Commonwealth country.

China was the key Far Eastern theatre of the global anti-fascist war. Chinese resistance to Japanese aggression played a decisive role in the final defeat of the Japanese forces. China’s war of resistance started earlier than the battles that took place in other countries, and lasted the longest. During the arduous conflict, the Chinese people contained and fought against nearly 80 per cent of the main force of the Japanese militarists, weakening their capacity by 1.5 million troops.

The war in China supported Allied operations in Europe and the Pacific, and prevented strategic co-ordination between the Japanese fascists and their counterparts in Germany and Italy. During the war of resistance, which lasted fourteen years, the Chinese military and civilians made enormous sacrifices, bearing over 35 million casualties, including more than 3.8 million soldiers. The economic loss to China was in excess of US$600 billion.

We will never forget the precious support rendered to the Chinese people by anti-fascist allies, including New Zealand. New Zealand Chinese businessmen and trade unions led a boycott movement against Japanese imports, while watersiders refused to load scrap metal destined for Japan. Rewi Alley initiated a movement to organise industrial co-operatives in China to provide military and civilian supplies during wartime. The Chinese industrial co-operatives became a unique force for unemployed workers and refugees to support themselves, and to support the war of resistance against Japan. Kathleen Hall, whose Chinese name was He Mingqing, worked with Canadian doctor Norman Bethune to rescue wounded at the battlefront, with scant regard for her own safety. She also transported medical supplies to the border regions, before being captured by the Japanese Army. New Zealand also accepted Guandong refugees escaping the war.

The anti-fascist war is part of the glorious history China and New Zealand share. Countless brave people sacrificed their lives for peace. May their souls never be forgotten. On 3 September, China held the Commemoration of the 70th Anniversary of the Victory of the Chinese People’s War against Japanese Aggression to remember the history, cherish the martyrs, treasure peace and look to the future. A total of 49 countries attended the commemoration, including 30 heads of state and government, nineteen high-level government representatives as well as ten leaders from international and regional organisations. Sir Don McKinnon, the New Zealand prime minister’s special envoy, chairman of the New Zealand China Council and former deputy prime minister, attended the commemoration on behalf of New Zealand.

The past, if not forgotten, serves as a guide for the future. It has been 70 years since the end of the Second World War, yet the world is far from tranquil. Regional instability and conflicts have not subsided, non-traditional security issues and global issues are increasing and inequality and a lack of democracy still exist in international relations. Some Japanese politicians continue to move against the tide, distaining justice and attempting to whitewash the history of aggression.

The Chinese people engrave the suffering brought by wars in their bones and on their hearts, and are firmly committed to a path of peaceful development. The Chinese nation has always been peace-loving. The pursuit of peace, amity and harmony is an integral part of the Chinese character. China will unswervingly follow a path of peaceful development. This is a strategic choice by the Chinese government and its people in light of development trends and their own fundamental interests.

To avoid a repetition of the tragedy of the Second World War, China, New Zealand and other countries, based on the successful outcome of the Second World War, worked together to jointly establish the United Nations, promoting the establishment of a post-war international order and laying the foundation for an international legal framework and mechanism to safeguard world peace. China and New Zealand are contributors to and facilitators of the post-war international order and share a common understanding on peace and security.

Peace should be safeguarded by all, and development should be shared by all. The two countries should firmly uphold the outcomes achieved by the victory of the global war against fascism, to promote regional and world peace, security, stability and development by working closely to safeguard the international order built on the purposes and principles of the UN Charter.
Global development goals

Sagarika Dutt reviews discussion about the post-2015 development agenda in a recent publication.

The second edition of Global Development Goals was published by the United Nations Association of the United Kingdom as a contribution to the discussions about the post-2015 development agenda that led to the adoption of the new Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) by the United Nations in September 2015. It may be recalled that in 2000 at the UN Millennium Summit world leaders signed the Millennium Declaration, which included the Millennium Development Goals (MDG) to be achieved by 2015. The goals centred on poverty, health, education and the environment and were, to a large extent, shaped by the UN conferences of the 1990s. As Jan Eliasson, UN deputy secretary-general, points out in his foreword, ‘A new transformative agenda’, the world has succeeded in halving extreme poverty, thanks in large part to economic advances in the developing world, particularly in Asia... yet, with the 2015 deadline approaching, much more must be done, especially in and for the poorest countries and those mired in conflict. We are counting on Member States, civil society, the private sector and other partners to redouble their efforts in the time that remains.

But it is also a time for stocktaking and building on the lessons learnt from the Millennium Development Goals, and setting new goals for the international community. For this purpose, an Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals was appointed by the UN General Assembly, as mandated by the 2012 Rio Conference. It completed its report in July 2014 on the shape of the post-2015 agenda. Helen Clark, UNDP’s administrator, writes in her foreword, ‘Delivering on bold ambitions for equity and sustainability’, that ‘the report represents a welcome recognition of the need to address the drivers of long-term development. If the cycle of major humanitarian crises is to be broken, more peaceful, cohesive, and resilient nations that can sustain development progress need to be built’.

As the UNDP has a good track record of assisting UN member states, her views on sustainable development are invaluable. She believes that the inter-related goals of development, peace, stability and prosperity can be achieved throughout the world provided an investment is made by states and their governments in improving governance and creating a just society. To prove her point, she asserts that with UNDP assistance many countries are expanding governance and creating a just society. To prove her point, she asserts that with UNDP assistance many countries are expanding and meeting their human rights obligations.

But the main theme of this publication is ‘partnerships for progress’. As Eliasson points out, ‘partnerships have played a vital role in our efforts to achieve the MDGs... They will remain crucial for the success of the SDGs and the post 2015 development agenda’.

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GLOBAL DEVELOPMENT GOALS:
Partnerships for Progress

Partnerships in a variety of sectors ranging from health to education have mobilised knowledge, expertise, and financial and human resources. The piece written by Janssen Pharmaceutica N.V. argues that collaboration is a powerful driver of change and that the company ‘has a long legacy of working with partners to improve health’.

Some of the articles reviewed adopt a more critical approach to partnerships. For example, Michael O’Neill argues that ‘partnerships are valuable only if they strengthen our ability to deliver significant results in development’. He provides an example of a successful partnership — the UN–World Bank MDG Acceleration Framework (MAF) plan, which was developed by Colombia in 2010 to better implement its Cartagena Policy for Productive Inclusion for the poor and vulnerable.

Critical aspects

The articles published in this edition are grouped under five headings: Funding Development; From Aid to Co-operation; Delivering Results; Sharing Knowledge; and Widening Participation. These headings indicate the most critical aspects that need to be addressed if the new (and revised) sustainable development goals are to be achieved within the given/specified time frame.

On the subject of ‘Financing development goals’, Mohieldin writes that overseas development assistance will remain an important source of development finance, especially for the poorest countries. But other sources of finance also need to be tapped. According to a World Bank report entitled ‘Financing for Development Post-2015’, development financing requires better and smarter aid, domestic resource mobilisation, domestic private finance and external private finance. An International Conference on Financing for Development held in Addis Ababa in July 2015 brought together governments, international financial institutions, development partners and the private sector, and was an opportunity to discuss how the implementation of the post-2015 development agenda will be financed.

However, the irony is, as Jo Marie Griesgraber, executive director of the New Rules for Global Finance Coalition, writes in her article, ‘Tax systems to support development’, financial outflows from developing countries are far greater than the international aid they receive. This is partly because multinational corporations are able to avoid paying taxes through transfer pricing, as we have known for a long time now. A comprehensive overhaul of global tax systems is needed.

In the section on ‘From Aid to Cooperation’ the issue of co-
operation between countries and partnerships in general are addressed. Again, most of them are written from different critical perspectives. For example, Sylvie Aboa-Bradwell, founder of the Policy Centre for African Peoples, London, writes in ‘Myth-busting: a sine qua non for Africa’s 21st century development’ that Africa is the world’s most resource rich continent, yet ‘desperately requires aid from foreign governments and charities to fulfil the basic needs of its people, and achieve development’. Promoting good governance, on the one hand, and responsible entrepreneurship by Western companies operating in Africa, on the other, can change the situation. She also mentions that it is necessary to combat the distortion of global trade by developed countries’ agricultural subsidies.

Writing from a completely different perspective, Darian Stibbe, The Partnering Initiative’s executive director argues that ‘Too many partnerships are not delivering fully on their potential and, with few mechanisms to support new partnerships, the number of collaborations is only scratching at the surface of what is required’. He also points out that the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals did not deal with this problem in its draft reports and goes on to suggest how partnerships can be improved, partly through making an organisation fit for partnering.

The articles grouped together under ‘Delivering Results’ are also written on diverse topics and from different perspectives. In the piece entitled ‘Knowledge is power’, Veena Khaleque writes that communities should be given the knowledge and skills to make use of their existing resources to tackle poverty and enable local development.

But there are other ways of delivering results. Gyan Chandra Acharya proposes that measures such as duty-free and quota-free market access should be adopted to help the least developed countries trade their way out of poverty. Addressing a different but equally important issue, Germana Canzit and John Tckacik argue in ‘Environment and economic growth: inevitable conflict?’ that green growth and de-carbonisation will be the key to determining an inclusive and sustainable future for the planet. They discuss the concept of green growth and the progress that has been made in adopting a green economy. They conclude that ‘the energy sector, long a source of environmental degradation, is becoming a force for environmental renewal and inclusive economic growth’.

The following section suggests that sharing knowledge is the key to development. One of the most relevant articles in this section is ‘The foundation for development’ by Pauline Rose, professor of international education, University of Cambridge, and director of UNESCO’s 2013–14 Education for All Global Monitoring Report. She writes that ‘the international community and national governments have so far failed to sufficiently recognise and exploit education’s considerable power as a catalyst for other development outcomes’. For example, the education of women can reduce child mortality. One of the MDG was to achieve universal primary education and this section provides some facts and figures on progress made in different parts of the world. As there is still a lot to be done, this is one of the draft SDG (Goal 4).

The final section is on ‘Widening participation’. All the articles in this section stress the importance of an inclusive approach to development. In ‘Can ordinary people shape development outcomes’, Mariana Rudge writes that ‘if the post-2015 framework is to eradicate extreme poverty, its architects and implementors must listen to the individuals and communities directly affected by those deprivations and look for solutions that will solve the problems they face every day.’ In ‘Thinking global’, Gunilla Carsson, a member of the UN high level panel on the Post-2015 Development Agenda argues that partnerships between different actors on all levels are needed to identify and solve the planet’s problems. She also admits that the United Nations has not always been able to deliver on its promises and ‘has to be much braver in telling the truth, including about its own limitations’.

Way forward

It is clear that the focus has to move from aid and charity to addressing the structural causes of under-development and poverty. However, this may be politically unpalatable both at the national and international levels as there are too many vested interests around the world and too many leaders who are interested in maintaining the status quo and resisting change. Furthermore, even if the goal of increasing investment in education, health care and the environment is adopted, it will need commitments from all stakeholders, including the private sector, to deliver on it.

As regards the MDG, Phil Vernon (‘Making Goal 16 work’) states that they ‘were too narrow, and they undervalued the political aspects of development in favour of more technical issues’. He also points out that they failed to recognise that development processes are context-specific, and cannot be defined from a vantage point in New York. The open working group broadly accepted this very valid point. Vernon feels that although the SDG represent a marked improvement on the MDG, they are not sufficiently coherent, and more thought needs to be given to them, and specifically to how Goal 16, on promoting peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, can/will be operationalised.

Natalie Samarasinghe also writes that one of the most fundamental criticisms of the MDG is that they did not focus enough on reaching the poorest and most excluded, but unlike Vernon feels that the SDG are addressing these gaps and show a clear commitment to putting people at the centre of sustainable development. There are many other criticisms of the MDG, highlighted by the Report of the High-Level Panel of Eminent Persons on the Post-2015 Development Agenda, that will need to be addressed.

In the last article, ‘Goals for the future — challenges for the United Kingdom and the rest of Europe’, Sir Richard Jolly defends the MDG. He argues that while they were ‘far from perfect’, they represented ‘a gigantic step forward’. For the first time ever, a specific set of targets for poverty reduction and other human advances had been agreed by virtually all countries of the world and were made a serious focus for policy and action by many states, all the UN agencies and most international donors. They were also conceived as an alternative to economic growth as the path to development in poorer countries.

But this may well have to change as the private sector becomes more involved in the implementation of the SDG as active partners in a multi-stakeholder society, as several articles in this publication discuss. The United Nations has a role to play in encouraging this trend, and a good start has already been made by the UN Global Compact Leaders’ Summit 2013, as George Kell, executive director of the UN Global Compact, explains in his article ‘A duty to society’. Companies are beginning to recognise that ‘what is good for societies and the planet is also good for business’. But the momentum needs to be kept up. The adoption of universal goals, that take everyone’s interests into account, should also help in overcoming the ‘us’ and ‘them’ mentality, as Jolly argues, and help to convey/drive home the message that we are all in this together.

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WHAT DIPLOMATS DO
The Life and Work of Diplomats

Author: Brian Bader

Sir Brian Bader has given us a readable and honest account of what British diplomats do. It is neither a manual nor a memoir and it is certainly not a novel even though it shows diplomatic life through the experience of a fictional couple, Adam and Eve. Bader takes Adam from new recruit to first overseas post to head of mission. Throughout he juxtaposes relevant segments of his own experience. His comments are marked by common sense and well-targeted insights which though reflecting life in the British foreign service have broad relevance for New Zealand.

The discussion covers economic and consular work as well as trade promotion and trade policy matters with special reference to the areas of environmental, humanitarian and conference diplomacy. Bader has a good sense of humour, regrettably a dying commodity. For his first formal dinner party he had to wear a borrowed dinner jacket several sizes too large for him. He sat in some discomfort between two Spanish women who could not speak English. I felt for him. At my first official dinner I sat at the centre of a large table where neither to my right nor left were people who were at all interested in such a junior officer. Directly in front of me was a flower arrangement which would have required a machete to see through, let alone talk through.

Fortunately diplomatic life has become less formal, especially in terms of representational work. He suggests that 60 per cent of contacts made in diplomacy are wasted; the private sector in my experience would encounter similar losses. Nevertheless, as Bader points out, exchanges at such functions as national day receptions can provide useful information while informal contact is an essential element of establishing vital personal relations. Even in the new management-speak environment that would not — and should not — have changed.

In acknowledging the changes that have occurred in his time, Bader refers particularly to the expansion of business and economic work. As he rightly saw it, what businessmen wanted most from a British representative was not how to conduct their business. They know more about that than any diplomat. Rather they wanted frank analysis of the political scene and how it was likely to develop, a guide to business generally as well as identification of local decision-makers and help in gaining access to them. They also looked for sources of possible inward investment. Diplomats know that firms get their information from a range of contacts but Bader observed that ‘sometimes the most self-confident businessmen were surprisingly blinkered when it came to politics’. How true. In my experience in Papua New Guinea (how to work in a rich country with poor people and a high crime rate), Moscow (how to deal with an obdurate but nevertheless, given the right information and circumstances, willing apparatchiks), Samoa (how to get any reliable market information at all), South Korea (practically non-stop on everything including detailed briefing on the Asian financial crisis), I found that businessmen treated New Zealand posts as an important part of their overseas itinerary. This was particularly so where the head of mission and trade commissioner worked closely together as an important part of their local operation.

Looking back, Bader considered that some of his colleagues led more adventurous and dangerous lives; others rather more peaceful and boring. New Zealand counterparts will readily identify with his comment about weakened home roots especially at the conclusion of a career where one could easily end up virtually a stranger in one’s own country. ‘If one is foolish enough to talk about career experiences, neighbours and friends soon roll their eyes and return to local issues.’

A point some former colleagues will readily agree with is Bader’s reference to the ‘surrender’ of the diplomatic service to an ‘array of private sector management consultants’ peddling a gaggle of management nostrums. The 1980s were a time of market-led economic theory which also permeated government thinking. This was a worldwide phenomenon till 2008 when the global financial crisis put a brake on some Western banking activities but not before a creatively dull Treasury initiative landed government departments with what was termed a capital charge on assets. Thus real estate purchased or rented overseas at favourable rates had to be relinquished while the ministry’s excellent art collection was greatly reduced. One had to ask why ministers and many officials did not understand that the distinctive contribution of New Zealand artists was as much part of New Zealand’s identity as the All Blacks and the imaginative electronic software that underpinned New Zealand’s America’s Cup challenges.

Bader’s book is written with skill and insight. It is pitched to a British audience, but New Zealand diplomats and the general reader will gain much from his wisdom and experience.

BADER'S BOOK IS WRITTEN WITH SKILL AND INSIGHT. IT IS PITCHED TO A BRITISH AUDIENCE, BUT NEW ZEALAND DIPLOMATS AND THE GENERAL READER WILL GAIN MUCH FROM HIS WISDOM AND EXPERIENCE.

GERALD McGHIE

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MIXED EMOTIONS: Beyond Fear and Hatred in International Conflict

Author: Andrew Ross

In *Mixed Emotions: Beyond Fear and Hatred in International Conflict*, Ross argues that emotions have been poorly conceptualised and undervalued as a source of agency in the study of international relations. Due to what he calls ‘liberal’ assumptions about the value of reason as the proper standard of agency, international relations scholars tend to present the role of emotion in purely negative terms, failing to account for its productivity and ‘creativity’, or conceptualising it in schematic terms that oversimplify complex ‘circulations of affect’ by reducing them to simple ‘cycles of hatred’ or undifferentiated ‘fears’ tied to over-specific identities. A proper understanding of phenomena ranging from terrorism to ethnic conflict, according to Ross, requires much more nuanced attention to the ways in which emotions are generated and spread through networks of social practices.

Ross’s key argument is that emotion is intensely social, ambiguous and capable of creatively disrupting identities and norms, rather than private, clear-cut in its implications and conservative. Emotions are not mere feelings, but ‘expressive social displays’ that can be transmitted to others via both conscious and unconscious mechanisms. Ross explores the implications of this conceptualisation of emotion in two theoretical chapters and three case studies: the generation and circulation of emotion surrounding the 9/11 attacks in the United States and the Madrid train bombings on 11 March 2004; the complexity of emotion in the mobilisation of nationalism in early 1990s Yugoslavia and the processes leading to genocide in Rwanda; and the ways in which emotions are framed by institutions of transitional justice, such as the international tribunals for the former Yugoslavia and Rwanda, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission in South Africa and the Gacaca courts in Rwanda. Throughout these chapters, Ross argues that standard ways of framing the emotions at work in these settings (for example, accounts of ‘cycles of hatred’ in ethnic conflict) oversimplify their ambiguity and their relationships with existing identities and norms. Terrorism does not automatically lead to fear of the terrorist and the desire for retribution; strong nationalist passions are not always generated by conscious processes of political manipulation and are not always connected with well-defined identities; and the rituals of transitional justice often fail to resonate emotionally with many of their audiences in ways that are sometimes problematic for the ‘social repair’ of relationships damaged by civil conflict.

The book’s main virtue is its use of micro-sociological evidence for the generation and circulation of effect. That emotion is produced and amplified in face-to-face interaction is incontestable, but Ross creatively extends the interaction ritual framework developed by Randall Collins and other sociologists to incorporate ‘mediated’ interactions into an account of the circulation of emotions within large networks of actors, and brings in much useful evidence from disciplines ranging from neuroscience to anthropology to make sense of these flows of emotion. Ross also rightly stresses that strong political emotions are not simply the result of manipulative and cynical leaders whipping up the passions of deluded masses; even the most manipulative leaders are rarely in full control of the emotional valence of the symbols and rituals they make use of, and are often in the grip of the same emotions themselves. And Ross performs a useful service by showing how specific emotions are only contingently, rather than necessarily, associated with particular identities.

Nevertheless, I found the book sets up a number of sterile and facile oppositions, for example between supposedly traditional theoretical perspectives that emphasise reason and new theoretical perspectives that emphasise emotion, or between the ‘liberal’ view of emotion as a private phenomenon playing little role in proper political life and the supposedly more enlightened view of emotion as a ‘social’ phenomenon that is ubiquitous in politics. But human beings engage in strategic and reasoned action and are also directed by flows of emotional energy; there is no interesting point to be made shadow-boxing with Descartes or Kant, especially since (as Ross indirectly acknowledges in a few passages) very important parts of the Western tradition of political thought (from arch‐realist’ Hobbes to Hume to ‘liberal’ Smith, to mention only the most obvious early modern thinkers) took emotion extremely seriously as an important part of social and political life. Similarly, though Ross correctly notes that strong emotion does not always support the status quo, and that the process of emotional contagion may change the objects of emotion and challenge existing norms and institutions (as, of course, nationalist mobilisation attests!), this descriptive claim is not widely denied.

Moreover, Ross often seems too impressed with the contingency of emotions, and thus fails, so to speak, to see the forest for the trees. While it is true that ‘the ambiguity and fluidity of emotions gives reason to pause before concluding that the negative expressions of emotion are necessarily or automatically impediments to justice or contrary to the goals of social repair’, there are reasonable grounds to conclude that *some* such negative emotions are *often* impediments to justice and social repair (especially when expressed through particular institutional settings or rituals), and therefore good institutional design should attempt to minimise their impact. ‘Necessarily and automatically’ are red herrings here; in social settings almost nothing happens necessarily or automatically. Thus, while it may be true that ‘[t]ransitional justice institutions should not seek to eliminate emotional expression but, on the contrary, to ensure it is not impeded by narrowly conceived political interests and discourses’, it is also the case that vested interests may make use of emotion for their own purposes, and various procedural safeguards that prevent the expression of particular emotions in some settings or channel it through particular procedures are often unavoidable and desirable.

Ross’s argument is more interesting when he traces the specific social practices through which emotions change valence or become attached to distinct objects (for example, the rituals
through which a variety of economic grievances were absorbed into nationalist mobilisation in Yugoslavia), yet less specific than it could be. For example, there is a gap between the large-scale rituals of nationalist mobilisation (the ‘meetings of truth’ in Yugoslavia or the radio programmes in Rwanda that prepared the ground for genocide) and the actual violence of genocide, which has its own emotional dynamics, as the micro-sociologists of violence have shown; and it is not clear how this gap is to be bridged in Ross’s account.

Overall, Ross’s work is a valuable contribution to the study of ritual and emotion in international relations; yet I cannot avoid a measure of disappointment in the failure of the book to go, as the sub-title promised, ‘beyond fear and hatred’.

XAVIER MARQUEZ

BLUEPRINT FOR REVOLUTION: How to use rice pudding, lego men, and other non-violent techniques to galvanise communities, overthrow dictators, or simply change the world

Author: Srdja Popovic and Matthew Miller

At the heart of this book lies one of the most pressing challenges confronting those of us interested in improving the contemporary state of world affairs, namely: how to peacefully encourage democracies to take root in the face of recalcitrant and oppressive dictatorial regimes. As observers of international relations will be well aware, recent efforts to democratise, particularly since the student occupation of Tiananmen Square in 1989, give focus to the potency of what Popovic finds both his subject matter and intended audience.

This book is not written as an academic treatise. Nor is it a theoretical examination of the non-violent philosophies of Mahatma Gandhi or Martin Luther King, Jr (though the ideas of these two thinkers are clearly evident in the text). Rather, the book’s style is informal, pitched at a younger generation of university-aged people who intuitively appreciate that there is something wrong with the world in which they live, but cannot quite articulate the problem in meaningful ways or are unsure that their violence does not often effect the desired change. In fact, heightened levels of violence also stimulate fear, which can in turn make strong leaders more attractive to some citizens.

This book is structured into eleven main chapters. Some of these chapters seek to develop the reader’s understanding of the key issues associated with non-violent democratic movements. The first chapter, for example, encourages potential activists to embrace a new appreciation of their own circumstances as a location where serious change can happen, seeking to dispel pessimistic attitudes. A subsequent chapter encourages a deeper understanding of the benefits associated with non-violent campaigning while the conclusion suggests that readers of the book are themselves likely agents of change.

The remaining chapters describe the skills of strategy and techniques needed to conduct a revolution of this kind. These include: designing a recognisable symbol that can be easily and anonymously reproduced as part of a movement’s brand; articulating a simple ‘vision of tomorrow’ that unifies widespread support rather than divides the community; planning for and sustaining momentum by selecting contests that are sufficiently serious to matter but small enough that victory is achievable; deploying comedy as a means of illustrating the misuse of power by authorities and, potentially, of attracting sympathetic members of the police and security forces to the movement; weakening the regime’s key pillars of support and increasing the cost of the regime’s use of power and force; maintaining message discipline and unity of message; and knowing when to declare victory. ‘Proper revolutions are not cataclysmic explosions; they are long, controlled burns,’ Popovic declares.

Popovic not only diagnoses a real world problem and describes a viable antidote, but also offers to help instruct patients on how to proceed according to their specific situations: he goes as far as to provide his own email address on the final page. This book really is a blueprint for democratic change from below. Yet such democratic revolutions need to overcome not only dictators and despots but also those representing the forces of neoliberalism which are corroding Western democracies, and the disenfranchisement and apathy of ordinary citizens. In addition to those young and aspiring middle-class revolutionaries scattered around the world, this book, and in particular its sound treatment of strategy development and implementation, will be of interest to readers of political strategy, international relations and global civil society.

DAMIEN ROGERS
National Office and branch activities.

On 1 July Elhadj As Sy, the secretary general of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, addressed a meeting at Victoria University on ‘The Changing Face of Humanitarian Action: the Role of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement’. This meeting was a joint effort with the New Zealand Red Cross and the International Federation of the Red Cross.

On 28 July Prof Alan Johnson, a senior research fellow at the Britain Israel Communications and Research Centre, gave a lecture at VUW on ‘Understanding and Countering Extremism Among Young British Muslims.’

On 10 August, in conjunction with the Embassy of Belgium and the Delegation of the European Union to New Zealand, a meeting was convened at VUW to hear Prof Jean-Pascal van Ypersele, the vice chair of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) and professor of climatology and environmental sciences at the Université Catholique de Louvain, Belgium, speak on ‘Key Messages from the IPCC 5th Assessment Report — Challenges and Opportunities Ahead of the COP21 in Paris’.

A meeting was co-hosted with the Embassy of Germany at Te Papa on 26 August to hear Freiburg University’s Professor Jörn Leonhard give an address on ‘Empires, Nation States and Violence: the First World War in Perspective’.

Auckland
20 Jul Jim Donegan (US consul-general), ‘Challenges and Prospects for South Sudan’.
29 Jul Col Colin Richardson (Centre for Strategic Studies VUW), ‘The Continuing Relevance of the Classics to Military and Strategic Thinking’.
5 Aug Tim Wright (Asia-Pacific director of the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons), ‘The Transformative Potential of a Treaty Banning Nuclear Weapons’. This meeting was co-convened with the International Law Association.
11 Aug Dr Thitinan Pongsudhirak (Sir Howard Kippenberger visiting chair in strategic studies, VUW), ‘South-east Asia Between Democracy and Authoritarianism: Implications and Lessons’.

Christchurch
The following meetings were held:
22 Jul Gabriela Roldan (doctoral candidate, Gateway Antarctica, University of Canterbury), ‘Celebrating Antarctica’s National Day: Nationalism and the Construction of an Antarctic Identity in Ushuaia, Argentina’.
29 Jul Dr Pongsudhirak, ‘ASEAN Between Mainland and Maritime: Implications for New Zealand’.
4 Aug Dr Jenny McLeod (visiting Canterbury fellow), ‘Gallipoli, Commemoration and the Rhetoric of International Friendship’.

Nelson
In the last three months the branch has heard addresses by various speakers: British High Commissioner HE Jonathan Sinclair (14 May), Samoa’s High Commissioner HE Leasi Scanlan (23 June), Dr Pongsudhirak (14 July) and veteran journalist and writer on Pacific issues Michael Field (22 July). In addition, on 18 June, a dinner was arranged for the US ambassador, HE Mark Gilbert, and his wife to meet ten longstanding members.

Timaru
The branch AGM was held on 15 June. The following officers were elected:
Chair — Rosie Carruthers
Secretary — Margaret Hunter
Newsletter editor — Derek Hughes
Following the AGM Scott Thomson, a founder of the branch and NZIIA life member, addressed the branch on ‘Flights of Fancy — from Mud to Myth in World War I and the Modern Middle East’.

Waikato
The following meetings, co-convened with Waikato University’s Political Science and Public Policy Programmes, were held:
5 Aug Dr Maria Armoudian (lecturer, Auckland University), ‘The Forgotten Genocide at 100: Why the Armenian Genocide Still Matters Today’.
2 Sep Dr Negar Partow (senior lecturer, Centre for Defence and Security Studies, Massey University), ‘The Silenced Women of the Islamic State’.

Wellington
The following meetings were held:
18 Jun Jo Leinen (member of the European Parliament), ‘The Future of European Integration on the Background of BREXIT’ (co-hosted with the Delegation of the European Union to New Zealand).
29 Jun Dr Colin Robinson (Centre for Strategic Studies), ‘Somalia: A Better Way Forward?’
8 Jul Dr Negar Partow, ‘The Silenced Women of the Islamic States’.
19 Aug Prof Jane Kelsey (professor of law, policy and international economic regulation, University of Auckland), ‘What’s at Stake with the TPPA’.

Wairarapa
The following meetings were held:
24 Jun HE Ms Damla Yesim Say (Turkey’s ambassador in New Zealand), ‘Turkish Foreign Policy: Guiding Principles and Responses to New Challenges’.
29 Jul Dr Negar Partow, ‘Iran’s Nuclear Deal and its Regional Ramifications’.

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