

EDITORS' FOREWORD

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This special issue of the *National Security Journal* has its origins in a United States Department of State-sponsored tour of Hawaii for New Zealand-based academics in December 2019. Unsurprisingly, the well-selected on-site locations, weather, and overall environment in Hawaii made for an enjoyable experience. But as academics, what really gave the trip an invaluable quality were the insights that we were able to garner from the well-honed briefings at the various institutions we visited, and it must be added, the equally compelling informal discussions with staff that we interacted with.

Toward the end of the trip, a consensus emerged that we formalise the excellent discussion that was ensuing between us in a special issue of a journal. Given its status as one of the leading international security journals in New Zealand, the *National Security Journal* struck us as a natural venue for this enterprise. John Battersby, the managing editor of the *National Security Journal*, immediately saw the potential in our special issue idea and encouraged a formal proposal. This publication represents the final product of this collaboration.

The brief given to each contributor was to reflect a topic of their research expertise, and to include a section on the implications of the results of the 2020 Presidential elections for New Zealand in respect to that topic.

While no attempt was made at the editorial level to synchronise views, as editors, two major themes and a variety of significant questions have struck us as having emerged in an organic fashion from the articles in this special issue.

First, the theme of great power rivalry in a globalised era runs through this series of articles. Whether it is New Zealand's maritime security; Wellington's menu of foreign policy options in respect to Beijing and Washington; China's South Pacific policy; the US-Philippines alliance; or the breakdown of the post-1972 version of US engagement policy with China, the theme of intensifying Sino-US rivalry is increasingly central. What exactly should New Zealand's policy posture be toward China and the US? What is the acceptable level of tension that we are able and willing to sustain between our liberal democratic-values infused diplomatic language on foreign policy issues, and the fact that Wellington has to live in a world where might is often right? Even if we

accept that this tension is nothing new, it is clear that the intensity of tension has increased. A few questions emerge. Is it realistic to believe that we can continue to reap the gains of expanding economic ties with China at little or no cost to our relationship with Australia and the US? Are we prepared for an era where there will be increased great power incentives and pressure to adjust our foreign policy? Should New Zealand alter its alignment policy in an emerging bipolar international environment where the two states differ deeply on their basic ideology? If so, what are the principles that should guide such a significant change?

Second, since there is much more to world politics than the US-China relationship, there is the inevitable theme of New Zealand's place in the world and the related question of how foreign policy should be calibrated to respond to the not inconsiderable range of challenges facing us in the post-2020 era. A list of issues populate the 'in tray' of policymakers in Wellington. These include (but are not limited to): dealing with climate change; buttressing our medical infrastructure and skills capacity in a post-covid19 world; ensuring that our economy is 'fit for purpose' in an increasingly competitive international environment; managing relations with an Australia that is increasingly feeling the sharp edge of China's rise; responding to the opportunity of a new era in relations with the United Kingdom in a post-BREXIT era; looking out for New Zealand's interests in our periphery, which includes the South Pacific and the Antarctic. The articles in this special issue touch on many of these issues, often directly, and on occasion in brief comments. Certainly, we would welcome feedback from readers.

That said, we would like to thank John Battersby, the managing editor of the *National Security Journal*, for his efficient shepherding of the project. We would also like to give a shout out to U.S. Embassy Wellington and INDOPACOM personnel who supported the visit, for their energy and seemingly unflappable temperament in organising and making this trip so enjoyable.

Finally, it remains for us to thank each contributor for agreeing to be part of this special issue. Collectively, each one has played their part in turning what was an interesting dialogue into a volume that can contribute to what we hope is a debate within New Zealand about its security environment in the early twenty-first century.