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Executive Summary

The United States and Australia have had a long and resilient partnership since World War II. In 1951, Australia and the United States signed a security alliance (ANZUS), and since then Australia has fought alongside the Americans in many conflicts to include the Korean War, the Vietnam War, and Afghanistan. Today, Australia continues to support US efforts in the Middle East and the fight against violent extremist organizations. Moreover, Australia provides crucial intelligence gathering facilities for the United States in the Pacific. While a significant economic bilateral relationship exists, the partnership relies heavily on security matters. Since the 1970s, Australia has attempted to compartmentalize its bilateral ties with China and the United States. Australia has worked to bolster its economic links with China while strengthening its security ties with the United States. The rise of Chinese economic and political influence in Australia has created a dilemma for politicians in Canberra. Along with extensive economic integration, China's political power continues to grow in Australia. Australians engaged in a social and political debate whether Canberra should distance itself from Washington and seek to forge stronger ties with Beijing. This article will explore the Sino-Australian economic relationship and its influence on the ANZUS alliance today and in the future. As China's leverage continues to grow in the Pacific, the US must solidify its strategic partners. To offset the deep economic ties between Australia and China, the US must re-engage economically, diplomatically, and informationally to revitalize this relationship. To show its commitment, the US must continue to be an active participant in Australian regional and national issues.

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Introduction

The United States and Australia have had a long and resilient partnership since World War II. The Australia and United States Security Alliance (ANZUS) was brokered in 1951,¹ and since then Australia has fought alongside the Americans in many conflicts to include the Korean War, the Vietnam War, and Afghanistan.² Today, Australia continues to be a stalwart supporter of US efforts in the Middle East and the fight against violent extremist organizations—a priority for both nations. Moreover, Australia provides crucial intelligence gathering facilities for the United States in the Pacific. The partnership between these two nations has been and continues to be security focused. While the ANZUS alliance has been resilient for half a century, it has not been without disagreements. One such example was the phone call exchange between newly elected President Trump and Prime Minister Turnbull, in which President Trump voiced displeasure in having to honor the previous US administration's deal to accept Middle East refugees from Australia.³

In 1972, Australia recognized China diplomatically and began its economic relationship. Since its inception, Australia has attempted to compartmentalize its relationships and has also used its bilateral relationships to forge stronger bonds—a policy that is dependent on positive Sino-American relations. The United States has also sought to capitalize on China's growth. The rise of Chinese economic and political influence in Australia has created a dilemma in Canberra. China's economic influence in Australia is also changing as Chinese sway in political matters continues to rise. Beijing has also actively sought to influence Australian politics in its favor.⁴ Moreover, a growing number of prominent Australians, to include former prime ministers and foreign ministers have argued that Australia relinquish the US alliance and seek greater ties with China.⁵

The rise of Chinese economic and political influence will test the US-Australian relationship. China's efforts for more significant impact in Australia has led it to purchase large amounts of property, heavily invest in businesses, and contribute political donations. These activities will lead Australia to face new challenges. The ANZUS alliance will be no exception. Politicians and businessmen in Australia will have a higher stake in expanded Chinese relations; Australia will have a harder time in deciding whether to continue its US alliance or seek a new policy in which it can further capitalize from China's growing economy.

While the US has enjoyed relations with a reliable partner in the Pacific, the US must evolve its foreign policy with Australia. US foreign policy towards Australia received a boost with the 2011 announcement of President Obama's 'pivot to Asia' strategy.⁶ Australia welcomed this shift, as noted in Australia's 2016 Defence White Paper.⁷ Vice President Mike Pence's visit to Australia in 2017 reaffirmed the bilateral relationship and the need to create a more comprehensive approach to its dealings with Australia.⁸ Although the US has received Australian support for over half a century, the US must address the wedge that China is attempting to drive between the United States and Australia.⁹ The United States must take proactive efforts with the alliance and support Australia's leadership in the region. For the partnership to evolve and to show Washington's commitment to Canberra, it must engage in Australia's national concerns, help progress Australia's ties with the region, improve the methods to address security threats, and encourage Australia's active role in the region. The United States must curtail China's growing influence in Australia by revitalizing the ANZUS alliance with a variegated approach of multilateral economic partnerships, bolstering leadership in the region, and continuing to communicate the alliance's efforts for government transparency and a rules-based order.

Part I: US-Australia Alliance

Prime Minister Howard's presence in the United States during the attacks of September 11, 2001, marked a shift in relations. Australia invoked the ANZUS treaty for the first time in its history and joined the coalition in Afghanistan.¹⁰ Two years later, Australia followed US efforts in Iraq for which it received much widespread scrutiny and criticism from its constituents.¹¹ Presently, Australia continues to provide military support in Afghanistan and in other parts of the Middle East to fight global terrorism.¹² Additionally, the United States and Australia benefit from security cooperation and intelligence sharing. After many years of focusing on the Middle East and with the rise of China as an economic and military power, the US announced a policy shift to refocus efforts in the Pacific.

In 2011, President Obama announced the 'pivot to Asia' strategy, designed to bolster US presence in the region, maintain security, and foster cooperation in the region.¹³ The pivot was welcomed by Australia and many Asian countries as greater US commitment to the region.¹⁴ Moreover, a significant aspect of the pivot was the economic element designed to enhance influence in the region. The policy was a more comprehensive approach, and the Trade Pacific Partnership (TPP) was a significant part of the rebalance.¹⁵ In addition, Marine Rotational Force-Darwin (MRF-Darwin) and the 2014 Force Posture Initiative sought to increase cooperation, training, and interoperability between Australian and US forces. Both nations viewed these steps as an "essential ingredient in preserving stability and security over the coming decades."¹⁶

The United States and Australia continue to strengthen their security alliance as stated in Sydney at the 2017 Australia-United States Ministerial (AUSMIN) meeting.¹⁷ Australia and the United States continue to seek more comprehensive security cooperation to address issues that affect both nations to include violent extremist organizations, freedom of navigation in the South

China Sea, and other threats that de-stabilize the Indo-Pacific region.¹⁸ Economically, the United States possesses a trade surplus with Australia. The latest figures for FY 2015 reveal US foreign stock investment (FDI) in Australia was valued at USD 167.4 billion, while Australia FDI in the United States was valued at USD 42.3 billion.¹⁹ Moreover, in FY 2016, Australia was the US's 24th largest goods trading partner, the 20th largest agricultural export market (USD 1.3 billion), while the US is Australia's third largest goods trading partner after China and Japan.²⁰ While these two countries share significant economic relations, this partnership is principally focused on security matters.

Australia perceives itself to be a staunch US supporter, but at times Washington has not reciprocated its support. During the conflict in East Timor in 1999, Canberra sought Washington's support to stabilize elections, which the US government reluctantly capitulated after Australian pressure.²¹ The events led Canberra to question the United States' commitment to the partnership. A number of prominent individuals have argued for greater independence from the US and for Australia to seek greater relations with China.²² Former Prime Minister Malcolm Fraser has criticized Australia for being too subservient to the United States and called for the debate in Australia to reassess the opportunities provided by China for Australia's future development.²³ Fraser states, "Our task is not to embrace America, but to preserve ourselves from its reckless overreach," and for Australia to distance itself from the United States.²⁴

In 2003, after Australian commitment to the Iraq War, the Howard government received substantial criticism at home. Seeking to address public and political dissatisfaction and seeking to re-brand itself as an independent power, Australia sought to lead a multilateral effort in the Regional Assistance Mission in the Solomon Islands (RAMSI). Australia used RAMSI to justify the withdrawal of Australian troops from Iraq and the Middle East and instead focus on its region

of influence.²⁵ More recently, the United States sought Australian participation in freedom of navigation missions in the South China Sea, which Canberra refused due to its stance to not to take sides in the territorial disputes between Asian nations and for fear of escalating tensions with Beijing.²⁶ While Australians do not favor direct action against China, a 2017 Lowy Institute poll revealed overwhelming popular support (68 percent) "in favor of Australia conducting maritime operations designed to ensure freedom of navigation in the region."²⁷ Canberra's refusal to participate in these patrols indicate its delicate position between Washington and Beijing.

Alex Oliver writes that "support for the US alliance is rock solid,"²⁸ yet a closer analysis of the poll reveals a difference in Australian popular opinion. Although Australians seemingly support freedom of navigation in the South China Sea, China is perceived in favorable terms. Alex Oliver adds, "Most Australians (79 percent) see China as an economic partner rather than a military threat (13 percent) and ... Only 34 percent are in favor of using Australian military forces if China initiated a military conflict with one of its neighbors over disputed islands or territories."²⁹ The poll also revealed that Australians see China as Australia's best friend in Asia, while Japan comes in fourth place. When asked which relationship is more important for Australians, forty-five percent of respondents say the United States and forty-three percent say China.³⁰ While this may be expected due to China's economic influence in Australia, a greater divide exists in responses between generations.

While the US currently has a slight advantage in public opinion, Chinese political and economic influence should not be discounted. A more significant concern for Americans should be the deep demographic divide in Australia revealed by the poll. Oliver writes "younger Australians lean towards China, with 50 percent of those aged under 45 saying *China* is the more

important relationship, and 40 percent saying the United States. Older Australians favor the United States, with only 38 percent of those aged over 45 years seeing the China relationship as more important.”³¹ The demographic divide coupled with political and social influence by the Chinese government will have significant effects on the US-Australian relationship in the upcoming decades. China's efforts to influence the Australian government and population towards a pro-Beijing policy will continue. Beijing is attempting to change its public image in that it seeks peaceful growth. While the United States and Australia share cultural similarities, both nations cannot ignore Beijing's efforts.

Part II: Sino-Australian Economic Relations

Australia's Labor Government recognized and established diplomatic relations with China before the United States in 1972.³² US trade deals with China in the early 1970s stimulated Australia to open up its markets to the growing Chinese economy. While Canberra continued to develop its security ties with the United States, Australia concurrently used the ANZUS alliance to further its economic relations with China.³³ According to He and Sappideen:

Australia believes that in the context of her strong trading relationship with China on the one hand, and her strong strategic relationship with the US on the other, she will be able to do more than any other country to ‘determine the temperature’ of the region's affairs in the coming decades.³⁴

Australia assured both the United States and China that its bilateral relationship would not affect its economic or security affairs. Shannon Tow argues that between 1971-2007 Australia “often developed policies based on what they interpreted as Australia's national interests and pursued them even if they did not fully conform to US policies.”³⁵ Australia, like many nations to include the United States, has sought to capitalize on China's development in the last decades.

In 2007, Sino-Australian economic interdependence reached a new level. China overtook Japan as Australia's biggest trading partner and negotiated mammoth energy deals, valued at over USD 100 billion, with Australia spanning the next twenty years.³⁶ China's large resource deficit and Australia's plentiful natural resources enabled a mutually beneficial relationship. In 2014, Australia's Comprehensive Strategic Partnership elevated China's status and facilitated relations between both nations.³⁷ It aimed to bring together high-level representatives to discuss critical issues impacting both governments. On 20 December 2015, China and Australia signed the China-Australia Free Trade Agreement (ChAFTA), which included a Most-Favored-Nation (MFN) clause to protect Australia's competitive position.³⁸ With full implementation in 2029, various Australian export goods and services will receive a progressively duty-free entry into China.

In 2016, Australia and Chinese economic relations continued their growth. Figures released by the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade show Australia's reliance on the Chinese economy:³⁹

- China purchased AUD 93.5 billion of Australian exports (more than a quarter of Australia's exports to the world)
- China is Australia's top overseas market for agriculture, resources, and services
- China is the largest market for resource and energy products, worth an approximate AUD 74 billion
- The ChAFTA agreement locked-in existing zero tariffs on iron ore, crude petroleum oils, and liquefied natural gas
- Chinese investment in Australia reached AUD 87.2 billion by the end of 2016

- Australia's stock investment in China has grown to AUD 87.9 billion; the United States is Australia's largest foreign investment at AUD 617 billion.

ChAFTA improved opportunities for investors in both countries and also liberalized Australia's Foreign Internal Review Board regulations. Such regulations are designed to screen foreign companies for investment in various sectors both sensitive and non-sensitive. The new agreement opened investment for private Chinese investors in non-sensitive areas, and the Australian Government will screen Chinese investments at lower thresholds to include sensitive sectors in media, telecommunications, and defense-related industries.⁴⁰ Considerable Chinese investment in Australia in real-estate, agriculture, industry, infrastructure, and other various sectors has become significant and controversial. One such deal was the lease of the Darwin port for ninety-nine years to a Chinese company in 2016, in which Canberra neither informed nor consulted Washington before its approval.⁴¹ The Australian port located in the Northern Territory is less than twenty-five kilometers from the MRF-Darwin base and is the first Chinese investment of a port in a US treaty partner.⁴² The company leased the port for USD 361 million (at more than twenty percent over the next closest bid) and was found to have ties to the Chinese government. Such events led Australia to review foreign investment on national strategic infrastructure.⁴³

Sino-American economic relations dwarf the Sino-Australian economic relationship. In 2016, US exports to China were the third largest (USD 115.8 billion) with the US being China's biggest export partner (USD 462.8 billion).⁴⁴ In 2015, US foreign direct investment in China (stock) was USD 74.6 billion in the manufacturing, wholesale trade, and depository institutions. Chinese investment soared in the United States in 2016 to USD 45.6 billion—triple the previous year.⁴⁵ Such large investment has also raised concerns in the United States. Chinese investment

in the area of artificial intelligence in Silicon Valley has led US officials to consider strengthening the role of the Committee of Foreign Investment in the United States.⁴⁶ These statistics reveal the dependency by both nations on China's economy. Conversely, the results show China's dependence on these economies and the possibility to shape China's actions by collective inducement. Further engagement in other areas by the US and Australia will broaden the scope in which to influence China.

In addition to greater economic cooperation, Australia seeks greater Chinese military participation in areas of mutual interest, such as humanitarian assistance and disaster relief, countering piracy, and increased personnel exchanges. Australia's 2016 Defence White Paper states that "The government is committed to continuing the development of Australia's defense relations with China, and working to enhance mutual understanding, facilitate transparency, and build trust."⁴⁷ These points reveal Canberra's willingness to build greater relationships with China and seek greater understanding between these two nations. This presents an opportunity for the United States to work with Australia to help shape China's military activities as a responsible regional power.

While Australia has attempted to compartmentalize its economic policies with China and its security policies with the United States, Canberra is finding it more difficult to keep these separate. The economic interdependence between these two nations has grown, and the Chinese government continues to exert its influence in Australia's policies. China is attempting to change its image to one of peace-seeking and perceives US policy in the Pacific as one of 'containment' to Chinese interests.⁴⁸ China is making a concerted effort to change its perception in Australia and attempting to use its influence to persuade public opinion. Australians now face a more active Chinese government trying to influence Canberra and the Australian population.

Australian news outlets released information that Labor Senator Sam Dastyari had an AUD 5,000 legal bill paid by a Chinese millionaire, with ties to the Chinese government.⁴⁹ The press released the article after questioning the senator's bias towards Beijing's foreign policy. Australian authorities also have publicly condemned China's hacking attempts, which reflected a growing impatience with China's aggressive policies.⁵⁰ While China is attempting to change public perception of its intentions, such disingenuous measures are counterproductive to its cause. In June 2017, Prime Minister Turnbull made strong comments condemning the rise of Chinese aggression in Australia and introduced anti-espionage laws to Parliament.⁵¹

Today, Australia debates the effects of Chinese influence in Australian universities. Chinese students studying in Australia are closely monitored by Chinese authorities and are expected to toe the party line. Australia has an approximately 150,000 visiting students from China, and many of them are bringing a pro-Beijing attitude to the classroom that is impeding openness on such delicate subjects such as Taiwan, human rights, or any criticism of Beijing.⁵² Students speaking or rallying against China are reported to Beijing by Chinese officials or peers. Duncan Lewis, the head of Australia's domestic intelligence agency states, "We need to be very conscious of the possibilities of foreign interference in our universities."⁵³ The vast quantities of young Chinese students studying in Australia also have other considerable cultural and social effects on Australian universities and students. Chinese students account for about thirty percent of international students, and many pay full tuition. Australian universities rely financially on these tuitions and have become "especially vulnerable to pressure from Chinese students."⁵⁴ Such pressure on Australian universities and its financial reliance on Chinese students will have unintended consequences in the classroom environment. Australian students may become

subjected to a more pro-Beijing classroom environment, shaping the perception of the younger population, and possibly affecting popular opinion on Australia's foreign policy.

Part III: The United States and Australian Engagement

While the United States enjoys a long-standing and mutually beneficial alliance with Australia, this partnership cannot be taken for granted. A growing number of former politicians and academics question Australia's alliance and perceive it as a hindrance to Australia's progression on the world stage. Hugh White states that Australia cannot afford to support the US at the expense of its relationship with China and that “[Australians] will begin tacitly to acquiesce to China's claims to regional leadership.”⁵⁵ As the US continues to focus on the Asia-Pacific, Australia is a principal partner, and its support is key to US interests. The 2017 National Security Strategy (NSS) states, “Allies and partners are a great strength of the United States. They add directly to US political, economic, military, intelligence, and other capabilities.”⁵⁶ The United States should work to create trade partnerships, support Australia's regional leadership in multi-national security partnerships, and continue to communicate its efforts to Australia of maintaining a stable Pacific region.

Recommendations: Economic

The US-Australia alliance must evolve to a more comprehensive and variegated approach. Although the US is a large foreign investor in Australia, the US could elevate this economic relationship from its established market in industries, such as clean energy and renewable technology. Australia's 2017 Foreign Policy White Paper states, “A comprehensive US economic strategy for Asia will be as important as the United States' extensive security engagement.”⁵⁷ Both the United States and Australia remain financially tied to China, but the United States must become competitive to offset China's economic power. The United States

relies on bilateral economic relationships to advance its interests, and critics argue at Australia's expense. The United States is unable to replace Australia's reliance on the Chinese market but should seek to increase its economic collaboration, and increase its multilateral trade partnerships as a means to attain greater influence in the region.

China's economic influence has affected most nations to include the United States. Douglas Stuart writes, "Washington also continued to *walk on two legs* in its relations with Beijing, constantly looking for opportunities for cooperation with Beijing while hedging against a growing Chinese threat."⁵⁸ Australia is also looking to advance its interests and has actively sought a mutually beneficial relationship with China. In 2015, ChAFTA elevated interdependency and will continue to do so. Economically, the United States will not replace China's influence in Australia but would be able to have a more significant impact if it dealt in a multilateral basis, such as in the TPP.

An area in which the United States could bolster its economic relationship with Australia is clean energy. Despite political agendas in the United States, Australia is seeking to develop green resources and presents an economic opportunity for the United States. China made significant investments in Australia and is also striving to be a significant participant in this field. Through the Clean Energy Finance Corporation and Australian Renewable Energy Agency, the Australian government has invested AUD 4.5 billion in developing new sources of renewable energy, and it seeks to double its investment in research and development by the year 2020.⁵⁹ This field of research presents an opportunity for the United States to cooperate with the Australian government and lead in a global effort for the development of renewable energy.

Although the United States has signed onto some multilateral deals prior to the rebalance strategy, such as the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC), the United States has

interacted predominantly with Pacific nations on a bilateral basis. Australia and other Asian nations welcomed US participation in the TPP, and its involvement was perceived as increased US commitment to the region. Although sold to the public as a negative deal for the United States, economists have agreed that the TPP would have been a positive measure for the United States and its role in the region.⁶⁰ Stuart writes, “The TPP was a key soft power element of the pivot, designed to reestablish Washington as a regional economic leader.”⁶¹ The TPP was a means to counter China’s growing influence in the Pacific and seek further cooperation. The decision to withdraw from the TPP by President Trump, which was discouraged by Australia,⁶² will further enable China to fill the void left by the US departure. Stuart writes, “By removing the United States from the 12-nation agreement, [President Trump] has abandoned the field to President Xi on issues of regional economic cooperation.”⁶³ Consequently, the United States should rejoin the TPP as a means to maintain influence and credibility in the region.

Australia continues its membership in the TPP, and is participating in negotiations in the ASEAN centered proposal Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP). This significant partnership would include China and nine of Australia's top thirteen trading partners.⁶⁴ By removing itself from the TPP, Dian writes, the United States "would leave China with the opportunity of shaping the normative foundations of the Asian economic order for decades to come, through initiatives such as the Asian Infrastructure and Investment Bank (AIIB), One Belt One Road (OBOR), and RCEP.”⁶⁵ China has expressed its desire to promote the RCEP, and its “willingness to take the lead in managing the international economic order.”⁶⁶

The United States should actively seek participation in trade partnerships to continue to display a commitment to the region; moreover, it should contribute in cooperative efforts to curtail China's economic influence. Dian argues, “The TPP could alleviate the fundamental

dilemma faced by the Asian allies of the United States: the necessity to ‘hedge’ between the United States, their main security provider, and China, the economic engine of the region and their main commercial partner.”⁶⁷ US participation in trade partnerships facilitates its ability to influence and shape policy in the region. Active participation in these associations enable the United States to embed itself in the region and create habits of cooperation. The TPP displayed nations’ willingness to follow US leadership and minimize China’s economic influence.⁶⁸

Nations have sought to capitalize on China's economic development, to include the United States. Washington can curtail Beijing’s influence by entering multilateral deals. Australia has had to balance its economic relationship with China and its security relationship with the United States. Nations in the region welcome US presence but have also had to balance their economic interests with China. The recommended US efforts would facilitate cooperation to minimize Chinese influence and allow nations to continue positive US relations. It would further enable “keeping the region open to US influence and preventing China from creating a network of international institutions based on its leadership.”⁶⁹ Nations in the region have displayed willingness to work with the United States and continue to support efforts to preserve its influence and presence.

Recommendations: Diplomatic

Australia has taken an active role in regional affairs and will continue to do so in the future--efforts that may also benefit the United States. Australia displays a willingness to act cooperatively to ensure peace and stability, and has committed to increasing its defense budget to support these efforts.⁷⁰ These measures highlight Australia’s commitment and contribution to US efforts in the Asia-Pacific region. The United States should bolster involvement in regional

forums, continue active engagement in both Asia and Australia, and support Australian efforts in the Asia-Pacific.

While Asian countries are willing to work with the US, China's presence looms in their policymaking. These nations desire the United States to have a more substantial presence and to be an active participant to offset China's coercive policies. "Without sustained US support, the effectiveness and liberal character of the rules-based order will decline."⁷¹ Washington should bolster its participation in regional forums, such as the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), the East Asia Summit, ASEAN Defense Minister Meetings-Plus and seek to influence the region's rules and norms.⁷² ASEAN represents a key strategic location and economic interest for the US; however, it was not until 2009 that President Obama became the first US President to meet with ASEAN. Moreover, 2011 marked the first time a US President attended the East Asia Summit.⁷³ With regards to regional forums, the United States must continue to support these international engagements with high-level visits, such as President Trump's 2017 visit to Asia. President Trump's visit displayed support for APEC and celebrated the 50th anniversary of ASEAN; moreover, President Trump attended the East Asia Summit.⁷⁴ Greater US involvement, not just militarily, will counteract China's influence. Sir Angus Houston writes that Canberra should work with Washington to invest in these institutions and for greater involvement.⁷⁵ "The United States must lead and engage in the multinational arrangements that shape many rules that affect US interests and values."⁷⁶ It is imperative that the US seeks to re-engage with regional forums and bolster its commitment in these diplomatic efforts to maintain a credible role in the region.

Along with US participation, diplomatic efforts must endeavor to update these forums. The 2017 US NSS acknowledges that these multinational arrangements are critical to the US,⁷⁷

and therefore, US diplomatic efforts need to ensure the US retains credibility in the region. The US will further institute policies which are beneficial to interested parties and must help modernize these regional institutions and rules.⁷⁸ The US administration ought to employ effective soft power measures of the rebalance, such as deepening partner relationships and arranging joint and multilateral exercises.⁷⁹ These actions proved beneficial to the United States and its allies by strengthening diplomatic and military ties. While it must help shape the rules and norms of these multinational forums, it should attempt to make “room for China on US terms.”⁸⁰ It is important for the United States to advocate for these efforts, yet display its willingness to cooperate with China to prevent rancor; furthermore, it will enable both Canberra and Washington to message diplomatic efforts for China’s peaceful rise to its constituents.

As Australia seeks to continue multilateral efforts in the region and in regional forums, the United States must continue positive and active engagement. Australia’s willingness to expand its multilateral efforts,⁸¹ as stated in the 2017 Foreign Policy White Paper, will prove beneficial for the United States and the region--building greater trust and cooperation among nations. Australia's continued involvement will improve its standing in the area and its image as a regional leader for stability. Both Canberra and Washington should message these efforts to their constituents and highlight its importance. US Secretary of State, Rex Tillerson and Secretary of Defense, James Mattis’ visit to Australia in June 2017, represented a step in the right direction toward more significant commitment.⁸² The United States must maintain these efforts with high-ranking officials as proof of the importance of Australia and these multinational forums to Washington. High-level diplomatic visits, positive and active engagements, and continued relationships at all levels, with strategic messaging, will display a reinvigorated commitment to Australia and the region.

US efforts in these forums are perceived as US commitment and should be bolstered by the current administration. “Sustaining favorable balances of power will require a strong commitment and close cooperation with allies and partners because allies and partners magnify US power and extend US influence.”⁸³ It is imperative that the United States maintain proactive and persistent efforts in such matters to help curtail China’s coercive efforts.

Recommendations: Information

The United States and Australia share a close friendship and a rich history, and due to the prosperity experienced by both of these nations in recent decades, the ANZUS alliance has been taken for granted by both governments and constituents. Both countries have sought to capitalize on China’s booming economy, and these competing national and international priorities have enabled China's aggressive policies to advance. On a more personal level, the US-Australian alliance and person-to-person links have been overlooked. China employs overt and covert tactics to influence the region and Australia, which has helped shape perception in Beijing’s favor. Both Washington and Canberra should work together to adequately inform their constituents of China's efforts to disrupt and reshape the global norm through coercive and covert methods—international rules that have maintained peace and regional prosperity for over seventy-five years. Informationally, Australia and the United States must message China’s suspect tactics, message the importance of the ANZUS alliance, and strengthen people-to-people links.

The United States and Australia must message China’s coercive tactics in the region and globally, and focus this on younger generations. The themes covered ought to include such areas as Beijing’s predatory lending habits in third-world nations, aggressive policies in the South China Sea, and foreign political interference. Also, these messages should include China’s

offensive on human rights: its suppression of freedom of expression, the undermining of civil liberties in Hong Kong, and the restriction of religious freedom in Tibet.⁸⁴ Currently, as a result of ignoring these sensitive issues publicly, a significant percentage of the population view China in a positive light. Economically, many Australians perceive its nation's progress due to the economic relationship with China. Although China helps Australia's economy, other nations such as the United States and Japan contribute significantly to its prosperity. Canberra needs to inform its constituents of the other economic benefits derived from partners such as the United States and Japan--the highest foreign investors in Australia. Furthermore, Canberra needs to inform its citizens of the dangers of dealing with Beijing, such as its significant debts in private and public sectors.⁸⁵ American and Australian citizens must be made aware of China's efforts to destabilize the region with its aggressive tactics. As the 2017 US NSS states, citizens must be made aware of China's economic "inducements and penalties, influence operations, and implied military threats to persuade other states to heed its political and security agenda."⁸⁶ China's challenge of international laws and other bullying actions in the region endanger free flow of trade and threaten the stability of the region. Australia and partner nations ought to be aware of China's doctrine of Three Warfares, and Washington has to counter China's narrative.⁸⁷ Simultaneously, Washington and Canberra must message to the region that both nations seek to work with Beijing to maintain stability, prosperity, and peace in the region.

The US presence in Asia and the ANZUS alliance are critical to the security of the region. Americans and Australians need to be conscious of the fact that both nations, and many Asian nations, share similar values for sovereignty and the rule of law.⁸⁸ The 2017 US NSS explains, "States throughout the [Indo-Pacific] region are calling for sustained U.S. leadership in a collective response that upholds a regional order respectful of sovereignty and

independence.”⁸⁹ Australia echoes the United States' calls for transparency in government and denouncement of aggressive measures by nations. As stated in Australia's 2017 Foreign Policy White Paper, “[Australians] want a region where our ability to prosecute interests freely is not constrained by the exercise of coercive power.”⁹⁰ In order for the United States to champion these efforts, alliances will prove vital to help shape these international norms and achieve peaceful resolutions. The future challenges facing the ANZUS alliance and the region must be conveyed; yet, more importantly, the benefits of the alliance need to be emphasized to the American and Australian populace.

For both governments to reach more of their citizens, the interpersonal relationships need to be reinvigorated through the strengthening of people-to-people programs. The Australian demographic divide and opinion toward the United States can be tackled by both governments through bolstering short- and long-term study programs, internships, and other academic opportunities. In FY 2016, 2,500 Australians received student visas to study full-time, and 9,200 US students received Australian student visas.⁹¹ Compared to the 157,000 Chinese student receiving Australian study visas in 2016,⁹² the US-Australia student exchange is meager. The Australian government provided AUD 50 million to fund 10,000 students in Asia-Pacific region under the New Colombo Plan, which includes Chinese students but does not include American students.⁹³ Additionally, Endeavour Australia Cheung Kong Research Fellowship is a public/private partnership between Cheung Kong Infrastructure (Holdings) that provides short-term research scholarships for participating Asian nations and China. Five scholarships are given under this program and two-thirds of fellowships are allocated to China.⁹⁴ The US and Australia participate in limited public/private sponsored scholarships, such as the Endeavour Scholarships and Fellowships, and the Fulbright-Anne Wexler Masters Scholarship in Public policy; the latter

scholarship awards one individual for each nation.⁹⁵ These opportunities to connect people at various levels will strengthen the relationship between both nations and should be bolstered by both Australian and US governments. As stated in the Fulbright Commission website, the mission statement is "to promote educational and cultural exchange between Australia and the United States to enhance mutual understanding and strengthen relations between the two countries."⁹⁶ These exchanges build influence and strengthen interpersonal links between both nations that are key for the future of the US-Australian relationship and alliance.

The Australian and US governments must message China's practices to its constituents and the region, as well as inform the public of the benefits of this long-standing relationship in preparedness, interoperability, intelligence, cyber, and technology.⁹⁷ Australians and Americans should be made aware of the future challenges which lie ahead and the importance of this relationship for future stability. While these messages are crucial to inform and influence public opinion, people-to-people relationships are more effective and should be bolstered. Whether it is through academic opportunities or working holiday visas, these means will create stronger bonds between the United States and Australia.

Conclusion

Australia continues to experience its 26th consecutive year of economic growth,⁹⁸ and this progress is perceived to be due to Australia's partnership with China. The 2017 Lowy Institute poll revealed that most Australians see China as an economic partner rather than a military threat. These positive views of China are also shared by prominent Australians who question Australia's relationship with the United States, and argue Canberra should distance itself and seek greater cooperation with Beijing. These critics point to many economic factors and also emphasize the United States withdrawal from economic partnerships to seek a better deal.

Moreover, these individuals argue that Canberra may not receive Washington's support in times of crisis and that the United States will drag Australia into unwanted conflicts.

As China rises as an economic and military power challenging these norms, American and Australian citizens need to be made aware that these international rules, instituted post World War II, and the US presence, have brought peace, prosperity, and security to the region. During these uncertain times, the United States should seek to bolster its alliances and seek collective efforts to curtail China's aggressive policies.

Washington must show its commitment to Australia and the region through a comprehensive approach. In addition to its military presence and efforts to continue interoperability between military forces, other measures will reinforce America's position as an active participant and willing partner. The United States has to take measures to display its long-term commitment to Australia and the region by assuming an active role in multilateral efforts. Canberra and Washington need to revitalize its relationship through a variegated approach. The United States should make initiatives, such as:

Economic:

- Deepen economic ties from its established status, and invest with Australia in the research and development of clean and renewable energy technologies
- Returning to the Trans-Pacific Partnership
- Increasing its multilateral relationships. Pursue beneficial trade partnerships in which the US help shape the rules and institutions, and accord China's participation in US terms.

Diplomatic:

- Bolstering US participation in regional forums, such as EAS, and continue high-level visits and active contribution
- Bolstering leadership in the region to help update the international rules and forums
- Increasing involvement with Australia, and voicing support of regional efforts by high-ranking US officials.

Information:

- Messaging China's coercive tactics and the dangers posed to the region by China's actions. Both Canberra and Washington must inform its constituents of these challenges, and that both seek nations peaceful resolutions with Beijing
- Continuing its call for transparency in government and the rule of law. Both governments ought to work together to stress the benefits of the ANZUS alliance and its importance for regional stability
- Strengthening people-to-people programs. Academic opportunities and working holiday visas will continue to create positive long-lasting and influential effects for both the United States and Australia.

While the ANZUS Alliance remains strong, Chinese influence in Australia and the region cannot be neglected. Both nations must reinvigorate this long-standing partnership from its established status through a comprehensive approach; furthermore, Washington and Canberra need to reiterate to their constituents of the importance of the ANZUS Alliance for regional and global stability.

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