



## NATO invades the Pacific

By Elisa Barwick

Representing 30 member nations of close to one billion people, and working with 40 other “partners”, NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organisation) is positioning itself as a bulwark against China in addition to Russia. NATO should have disbanded at the end of the Cold War, but instead has undergone a dramatic expansion and now threatens to encircle the two major powers which oppose regime change wars and seek mutual solutions to the economic crisis.

In remarks to an 8 June NATO web forum launching #NATO2030, under the banner “Strengthening the alliance in an increasingly competitive world”, NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg spoke about NATO’s worldwide political and military influence. COVID-19 has “magnified” existing tensions, he said, including “the race for economic and technological supremacy”, with the rise of China “shifting the global balance of power”.

With “China coming closer to us from the Arctic to cyber space, NATO needs a more global approach”, he said, including “using NATO more politically” which involves actions both “military and non-military. Economic and diplomatic”. Looking towards 2030, the alliance needs to work more closely with like-minded countries, specifically “Australia, Japan, New Zealand, South Korea”. Replying to a questioner who pointed out that Article 2 of the NATO charter spells out economic collaboration among partner nations, Stoltenberg emphasised non-military ways of “securing peace”.

Just days earlier on 1 June, Washington think tank and de facto NATO lobbyist the Atlantic Council published an article by Ian Brzezinski under the headline, “NATO’s role in a transatlantic strategy on China”, which similarly examined the evolution of NATO from a Trans-Atlantic alliance to a global force, including a Trans-Pacific role. Brzezinski is the son of the infamous Dr Zbigniew Brzezinski, who as US President Jimmy Carter’s National Security Advisor activated the “Arc of Crisis” policy of British Islam expert Bernard Lewis, to stir up destabilising fundamentalist Islamist insurrections along the southern flanks of the Soviet Union. Ian Brzezinski served in the Defence Department during the George W. Bush administration, dominated by the neoconservatives who planned the circuit of regime-change wars that commenced with the invasion of Iraq.

The NATO alliance is vital for sharing intelligence, fostering collaborative action and developing a security strategy regarding China, wrote Brzezinski. He proposed a five-point program to establish a NATO-China Council for consultations with China; deepening engagement with Pacific partners such as Australia, New Zealand, Korea and Japan; establishing a NATO “Centre of Excellence” in the Indo-Pacific, “perhaps in one of the region’s partner countries”; and setting up “a small military headquarters element in the Indo-Pacific region”.

### The new battlefield

NATO has been working on global expansion for many years, particularly once it began working more closely with troops of non-NATO nations during the War on Terror, as with Australian troops in Afghanistan. At a January 2009 NATO conference in Turkey, “cooperation ties with

countries such as Japan and Australia” were proposed. Later that year, Australia and NATO formalised an agreement to exchange secret military information, to allow for “a deeper strategic dialogue between Australia and NATO and increased cooperation on long-term common interests”. In June 2012 Australian Prime Minister Julia Gillard signed a joint declaration with NATO for cooperation on common global security challenges, including terrorism and cyber warfare. Then-NATO Secretary General Anders Fogh Rasmussen stressed that given rising tensions in the Pacific, Australia and America “will be the leading nations”. (“British Empire grooms Australia, expands NATO, for war with China”, *EIR*, 8 Feb. 2013.) Under the 2014 Partnership Interoperability Initiative, Australia has participated in dialogue, information-sharing and military exercises with NATO. In 2019 Defence Minister Linda Reynolds signed up to a NATO partnership and cooperation program.

In 2011 President Barack Obama had announced the USA would step up its leadership role in the Asia-Pacific region with the “Asia Pivot”. This included basing 2,500 US Marines in Darwin. In a speech to the Australian Parliament on 17 November 2011, Obama declared: “I have directed my national security team to make our presence and mission in the Asia Pacific a top priority” in order to “preserve our unique ability to project power and deter threats to peace”. (When the Trump administration recently announced that several thousand US troops currently stationed in Germany would be reassigned, US National Security Advisor Robert C. O’Brien observed in a 21 June *Wall Street Journal* op-ed that “Thousands may expect to re-deploy to the Indo-Pacific”.)

Other efforts fused with the pivot, such as the attempted 2017 revival of the 2007-08 Quadrilateral Security Dialogue, the “Quad”, involving the USA, Japan, India and Australia, to strengthen a potential alliance to counter China. The US military announced it would change the name of its Pacific Command (PACOM) to the Indo-Pacific Command, reflecting its intention to recruit India to the strategy. India, with its long history as a “non-aligned” nation, was not swayed. At the June 2018 Shangri-La Dialogue in Singapore Indian Prime Minister Modi rejected the geopolitics of “great power rivalry” cited in US, British and Australian revisions of defence, security and foreign policy doctrines, and called for the region’s “order” to be based on “the consent of all, not on the power of the few”.

The Anglo-American-Australian push to encircle China did not let up. Defence Minister Linda Reynolds told a gathering at the International Institute for Strategic Studies in London on 8 July 2019, “We are currently seeing the biggest realignment of the strategic landscape since the Second World War.” She identified organisations consisting of



NATO chief Jens Stoltenberg promoting #NATO2030. Photo: Twitter

former British colonies as platforms for an expanded British role in the Pacific, including the Five Powers Defence Arrangement, comprising Australia, Britain, New Zealand, Singapore and Malaysia; and the Commonwealth of Nations. This could rectify the lack of “a treaty-based, collective security arrangement” (à la NATO) in the region, she said, indicating Australia was keen for “more militarily-capable” nations to be committed to such an alliance.

### Global Britain

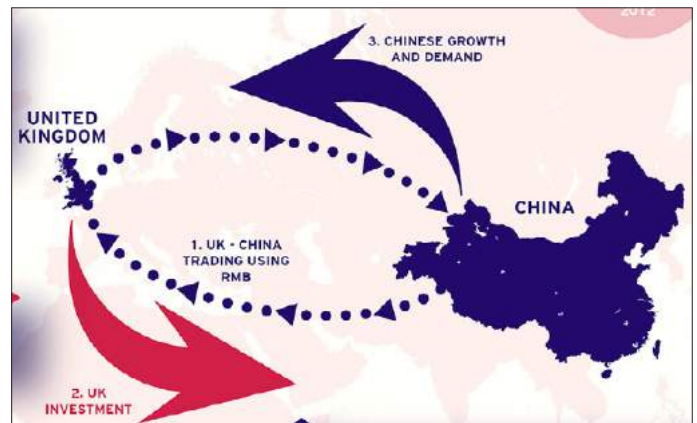
The language of the Asia Pivot was echoed in Australia’s own “Pacific step-up”, ostensibly to provide greater aid and development assistance to Pacific island nations, first unveiled in the 2016 Defence White Paper which depicted a shift in military strategy due to “changes under way in the Indo-Pacific region”. The step-up was upgraded by PM Scott Morrison in 2018 to include significant military and security components. In addition, Australia announced it would strive to establish “a diplomatic mission in every Pacific Islands Forum member in coming years”. Likewise, in April 2018, amid a series of meetings around the London Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM), then-British PM Theresa May announced the UK would open three new Pacific embassies, in Vanuatu, Samoa and Tonga.

The expansion was but a small part of the UK’s “Global Britain” mission, launched by PM Theresa May following Britain’s 2016 vote to exit the European Union. Also known as “Empire 2.0”, it was designed to give Britain extensive domination of trade in its role as global “free trade champion” to shape “a new era of globalisation” using networks such as the Commonwealth, the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) and even the intelligence-sharing arrangement known as the Five Eyes of the UK, USA, Canada, Australia and New Zealand. (Recently, Australian Treasurer Josh Frydenberg initiated a new economic dialogue between the Five Eyes to address the security implications of China-dependent supply chains. See “Don’t leave Australia’s economic future up to spies!”, AAS, 24 June.)

The head of the British Royal Navy, Admiral Sir Philip Jones, has described the vision as “nothing less than a new era of British maritime power”. Richard Reeve of the Oxford Research Group in a 27 September 2017 article, “Global Britain: A Pacific Presence?”, mapped out the plan for a new “Anglosphere alliance” comprising the Five Eyes; ANZUS—the Australia, New Zealand, United States Security Treaty; the Five Power Defence Arrangement; and “to some extent NATO”. That bloc would join up with countries in the region such as Japan, South Korea and perhaps India, forming “an Alliance of Maritime Democracies to uphold the rules-based global order, Global NATO, or, more bluntly, a strategy to contain rising China”. A 14 March 2018 London *Telegraph* article by *Sunday Telegraph* editor and City of London insider Allister Heath bluntly declared: “Forget NATO. We need a new world alliance to take on totalitarian capitalists in Russia and China”. Britain must take the lead in creating a new global military and economic alliance to enforce “democracy” and “capitalism” across the globe, he demanded. (A dossier of AAS articles on Global Britain is available at <https://citizensparty.org.au/global-britain>)

### The Australian beachhead

In January 2013 just as British PM David Cameron first promised the Brexit referendum, UK Foreign Secretary William Hague was in Australia declaring that “Today Britain is looking east as never before in modern times—we’ve set



An infographic on British domination of the global renminbi trade from Her Majesty’s Treasury, titled, “The UK as the global centre for investment in China”. Photo: Screenshot

our sights on far closer ties with Asian nations”. But Global Britain was not a response to Brexit. Long before America’s Asia Pivot, the UK was making its own, primarily economic pivot.

In 1995 London’s Royal Institute of International Affairs (RIIA), which had been examining opportunities for Britain to expand its power since the Iron Curtain between the West and the Soviet Union came down in 1989, hosted a forum on the topic “Britain in the World”. Addressing government ministers, senior establishment figures and even former US Secretary of State Henry Kissinger, Australian academic Katharine West, then working from London’s Institute for Commonwealth Studies, delivered a paper, “Economic Opportunities for Britain and the Commonwealth”. West presented the Commonwealth as a network that could link and dominate “regional and global elements in the international relations system” and exert policy influence worldwide, even potentially forming an alternative to the United Nations.

West argued that Britain would need to shift away from a declining Europe and orient to the growing economies of Asia. Australia would be particularly useful as a “jumping-off point for British companies to launch their business activities in the Asia-Pacific region”, providing a “shared Commonwealth business culture”, geographical proximity, a base for regional headquarters of British corporations moving into Asia, and a leading financial centre. She presented figures of dramatically increasing British investment in Australia.

The economic tools to be utilised to exploit Asian growth were mechanisms marketed by the British Mont Pelerin Society ranging from free trade to deregulation, privatisation and financial speculation, which were tested in Australia and New Zealand and showcased in the murderous looting of Russia after the fall of the Soviet Union (“Russia’s 1990s criminalisation was ‘Made in London’”, AAS, 30 May 2018)—all closely observed by China.

West had worked on her thesis with representatives of the over thousand year-old City of London Corporation—a private municipal body representing London’s financial district—which, following the 2008 global financial crisis, moved to dominate the global trade in Chinese renminbi, to take its cut of increasing monetary flows passing through China as the rest of the world economy tanked. This financial shift, also aimed at achieving insider status for Britain as China rose, was reported in “The City of London’s China pivot” (AAS, 11 July 2018). With the unfolding NATO-Anglosphere alliance, the next stage of the agenda is under way.