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This week we look at how Falun Gong has morphed into an international political group, whether Australia needs a War Powers Act of its own, and what young Australians think of the US and Asia.  Disclaimer: The views expressed below by Councillors are their own. The Australian Institute of International Affairs New South Wales does not take policy positions. | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | |  | |  |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | | A group of people standing in the grass  Description automatically generated |  |  | | --- | | [**Beware the Falun Gong**](https://www.abc.net.au/radionational/programs/backgroundbriefing/the-power-of-falun-gong/12475212)   The Power of Falun Gong is a three-part series by ABC News Radio Background Briefing in a joint production with ABC TV Foreign Correspondent.  The third and final part includes some comments by me on the political activities of the sect in Australia. Falun Gong is probably familiar to people in Australia through its annual spectacular Shen Yun, its free yoga classes and its yellow-coated demonstrators cadging support for its persecuted brethren in China.  Most people will be sympathetic to its call for religious freedom, though they may disagree with the sect’s claims of faith healing.  The ABC programs however reveal a more dangerous side to Falun Gong as it morphs into an international political group that uses its media presence to back US President Donald Trump’s campaign for re-election and calls for the overthrow of the PRC government. You can find Foreign Correspondent’s coverage of Falun Gong [**here**](https://iview.abc.net.au/show/foreign-correspondent/series/2020/video/NC2026H023S00). You can also listen to parts [**one**](https://www.abc.net.au/radionational/programs/backgroundbriefing/the-power-of-falun-gong/12475212), [**two**](https://www.abc.net.au/radionational/programs/backgroundbriefing/power-of-falun-pt-2/12483842) and [**three**](https://www.abc.net.au/radionational/programs/backgroundbriefing/the-power-falun-gong-3/12519278) of Background Briefing’s reports online.  Image credit: **[LongTrekHome](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Falun_Dafa_the_second_exercise,_standing_meditation.jpg" \t "_blank)** | | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | |  | |  |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | | |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | | These items was selected by Jocelyn Chey AM. Jocelyn is an Adjunct Professor at the Australia-China Relations Institute, University of Technology Sydney, Visiting Professor at the University of Sydney and an Adjunct Professor at the Australia-China Institute for Arts and Culture at Western Sydney University. She was previously a senior officer in the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade. Jocelyn is a Fellow of Australian Institute of International Affairs. | | | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | |  | |  |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | | A picture containing outdoor, building, road, motorcycle  Description automatically generated |  |  | | --- | | [**Going to War Again?**](https://www.besureonwar.org.au/the-morrison-governments-2020-force-structure-plan/)  With the United States increasingly confronting China and seeking support from its allies, Australia may soon join some form of US-led military action, for example in connection with the South China Sea. Statements following the July AUSMin talks in Washington, while expressing some degree of independence, did not rule this out. Paul Barratt, President of Australians for War Powers Reform and former Defence Department Secretary, [**suggests**](https://www.besureonwar.org.au/the-morrison-governments-2020-force-structure-plan/) that current Indo-Pacific turbulence and an increased Australian defence budget (in contrast to reductions in our diplomatic expenditure) strengthen the case for Parliament, rather than Executive Government, to decide on deployments of the Australian Defence Force into international armed conflict. He expresses concerns about the operation of ANZUS and Pine Gap. Image credit: [**US Navy**](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Australian_soldier_in_Afghanistan,_August_2008.jpg) | | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | |  | |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | | |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | | |  |  |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | | |  |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | | |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | | |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | | These articles were selected by Ian Lincoln, President of AIIA NSW since 2017. Ian was in the Department of Foreign Affairs for 33 years including postings in Asia, Africa, Europe and the Pacific. He was later an appellate member of the Refugee Review Tribunal and has worked in a number of community organisations | | | | | | | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | |  | |  |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | | A large building in the background  Description automatically generated |  |  | | --- | | [**Young Australians turn from the US towards Asia, and it isn't just Trump**](https://www.lowyinstitute.org/the-interpreter/young-australians-turn-us-towards-asia-and-it-isn-t-trump)  The numbers in the 2020 Lowy Poll reveal that only a quarter of young Australians see Australia’s alliance with the United States as “very important”. Kate Clayton and James Blackwell [**argue**](https://www.lowyinstitute.org/the-interpreter/young-australians-turn-us-towards-asia-and-it-isn-t-trump) that this is not merely a phenomenon of the Trump era, but a result of the image born out of the US role in the global war on terror, response to the global financial crisis and failure to address issues such as climate change and racial injustice. Millennials instead see Asian nations like Japan as the most responsible and trustworthy powers, owing in part to significant educational exchange with Asia through programs such as the New Colombo Plan. Clayton and Blackwell suggest that this distrust of the US alliance will probably continue among Generation Z, especially as apps like TikTok challenge the formerly US-dominated technology landscape. Image credit: [**Andy Felliciotti**](https://unsplash.com/photos/oN_cUY1v7hs) | | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | |  | |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | | |  |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | | |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | | |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | | This article was selected by Euan Moyle. Euan is a final-year Master of International Relations student at the University of Sydney. He is currently a risk analyst and editor for Foreign Brief, and a Young Leader with the US-based international affairs think tank Pacific Forum. He has formerly interned with the Lowy Institute. Euan has served on the Council since 2019. | | | | | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | |  | |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | | |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | | **From the Interns** | | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | | In addition to our Councillors, we invite one of our interns to share with you what they have found insightful or interesting in the world of international affairs over the past week. This week, Amelia Proudlove examines the status of ecological change in defence planning and what a post-COVID international order could look like.  Disclaimer: The views expressed below by interns are their own. The Australian Institute of International Affairs New South Wales does not take policy positions. | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | |  | |  |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | | A truck driving down a river  Description automatically generated |  |  | | --- | | [**Military Planning and Ecological Threats**](http://www.internationalaffairs.org.au/australianoutlook/is-australias-security-policy-an-expensive-failure/)  As the Australian government plans to invest billions more in military hardware, it is an apt time to consider what threats this investment is responding to. In this article, Mark Beeson [**outlines**](http://www.internationalaffairs.org.au/australianoutlook/is-australias-security-policy-an-expensive-failure/) how the approach so far fails to consider the growing non-traditional security threats arising from ecological change, economic crises, and disease. He suggests that this should have been a main concern in the new Strategic Update. He argues that failure to respond adequately to climate change and consider it as a threat to security is a severe misjudgment of our current government’s policy, which may have long lasting negative consequences. Image credit: [**The National Guard**](https://www.flickr.com/photos/thenationalguard/31392681964/in/photolist-PQ4GDj-TauZAL-Sapy4x-5htLoU-S7RJHf-SaqM1c-XY6ftK-T6eDNU-FdYCWa-YfcJSK-zankYA-HoVtMC-FbDXQJ-FhRRu9-G59xm9-Fi3uDD-HEy9Mx-smEJB2-tius6Z-a8Vy4Z-KcKStJ-ameJqD-8D23TY-8D21xS-8XP2Dq-8CXXYH-8CXWq2-9bogTG-24srhve-9bogNo-8rDn7k-8D1ZRU-8D1Zks-9GC3UP-4eWg75-8XP2Lf-9bk9Kz-MrwSFX-9svPd7-9bk9WD-8XP2rw-gbNXxX-8XP2th-8XP2MN-8XKYgB-8oE2xC-URSKug-fZAZfz-9sCH9W-X1oMCo) | | |  |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | |  |  |  | | --- | | [**The World Order Before and After COVID-19**](https://www.lowyinstitute.org/publications/global-order-shadow-coronavirus-china-russia-and-west)  Bobo Lo’s recent [**report**](https://www.lowyinstitute.org/publications/global-order-shadow-coronavirus-china-russia-and-west), published by the Lowy Institute, discusses the emerging new world order. He explains the COVID-19 pandemic has prompted nation states to act far more independently, with many lapsing into varying degrees of self interest. Lo blames this on the ‘liberal’ Western world, showing how extensively they have failed to abide by the rules and values of the existing international order. However he sees the possibility for an alternative order, one which supports global responses to the challenges of our times. Lo argues this alternative order must transcend national boundaries and strategic rivalries to succeed.  Image credit: [**John and Melanie (Illingworth) Kotsopoulos**](https://www.flickr.com/photos/melanieandjohn/127443063/in/photolist-cgboc-YCxwCP-cFdGJs-99q2QZ-6owGnC-HysWzv-f2fCX5-9gdbxS-odyFQn-8gJByH-pj6Tn9-TA86jg-5CJxvj-c1Efcw-5bESqS-FoyiBL-8jszaZ-23bfUEf-HfnPCS-23bfUFC-mrYKaE-6CgXqH-7dyQRC-5zozFE-SZH49Q-5d6HqB-53cUDg-tmGBB-EMDmdN-CmrmN-zZVya-gqR2w-yJvxX-jP4Bw-8ET3eb-8ESVQE-53xshM-8DNtUd-8GtQBZ-8DNuSJ-8zHSDt-86fcYs-5bESqy-sgQtw-cVAZZS-oAqeS-BbiHR-r8AoHH-5Rmyt-5oZqVC) | | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | |  | |  |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | | |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | | These articles were selected by Amelia Proudlove. Amelia is in her final year of a dual degree of a Bachelors of Arts/Law majoring in International Law and Global Governance at Macquarie University. During her studies she has been focusing on the role of international humanitarian law during conflicts, changing security, and counterterrorism. Amelia has been interning with the AIIA since February 2020. | | | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | |  | |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | | |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | | **What else we're reading** | | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | | * Ross Andersen, writing in The Atlantic, [**examines**](https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2020/09/china-ai-surveillance/614197/%C2%A0%C2%A0) China's investment in AI surveillance systems at home and abroad. * Garrett Graff [**highlights**](https://www.politico.com/news/magazine/2020/07/24/2020-election-disaster-perfect-storm-372778) eight challenges facing America's voting system this November in an article for Politico. * In the Sydney Morning Herald, James Massola [**gives**](https://www.smh.com.au/world/asia/why-is-the-south-china-sea-such-a-hotspot-20200727-p55fxh.html) a concise background to the South China Sea disputes. * Graham Readfearn, writing for The Guardian, [**explores**](https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2020/aug/04/theres-still-a-choice-new-zealands-melting-glaciers-show-the-human-fingerprints-of-climate-change) how researchers in New Zealand are investigating the impact of climate change on glaciers. * In an obituary in the Canberra Times, former senior diplomat and governor of Queensland Penny Wensley [**remembers**](https://www.canberratimes.com.au/story/6859701/a-pioneer-and-a-ray-of-sunshine/) the achievements of Tonia Shand. | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | |  | |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | | |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | | **Letters to the Editor** | | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | | **Get involved!**  We're committed to keeping conversations about international affairs going, so get involved in our Letters to the Editor section!  Each week, we publish letters from our subscribers about what they think of the issues we’re discussing.  You can take part in the conversation by emailing us with your comments on each week’s articles. There are just a few simple guidelines: letters should be no more than 100 words in length, and should only be about the previous week’s articles. Please include your name and affiliation, and a mobile number (which won't be published). If you are a university student, please include your university and current degree.  Send all letters to the editors at [**aiianswletters@gmail.com**](mailto:aiianswletters@gmail.com) by Wednesday at 5pm Sydney time for the chance to be published in the following week's newsletter. | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | |  | | | | |
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