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| |  | | --- | | Each week, some of our Councillors and interns share a selection of articles, analytical pieces, videos and podcasts about what is happening in the world of international affairs. This week, our Councillors examine the economics of "the shutdown" and the shortfalls in modern day spying.   Disclaimer: The views expressed below by Councillors and interns are their own. The Australian Institute of International Affairs New South Wales does not take policy positions. | |

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| |  | | --- | | A picture containing outdoor, several  Description automatically generated | | [**A Big Picture View of the Shutdown**](https://www.talkingpoliticspodcast.com/blog/2021/327-shutdownconfronting-leviathan)  I will confess that economics is not typically my strong suit. It was never my core discipline at university, and I sometimes find the connections between global markets and politics difficult to untangle. That is why I find it helpful to listen to experts who can piece it all together for me. In their most recent episode Talking Politics’ David Runicman and Helen Thompson [**are joined**](https://www.talkingpoliticspodcast.com/blog/2021/327-shutdownconfronting-leviathan) by Adam Tooze to discuss his latest book Shutdown, as well as the big shifts in economics and politics that are underway today. While they pay particular attention to some of the changes the COVID-19 pandemic has precipitated, it is clear that many of the changes we are experiencing today have their origins well before the pandemic. It is a fascinating hour long discussion which presents a wide-angle view of how the pandemic, climate change, geopolitics and many other topics are interconnected, great for those wanting to step back from the day-to-day news cycle. Image credit: [**Vlad Busuioc**](https://unsplash.com/photos/xyPxcqh8Tt8) | |

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| |  | | --- | | This article was contributed by Alex McManis. Alex holds a Bachelor of Arts with First Class Honours in Government and International Relations from the University of Sydney and was previously the Climate and Energy Security Fellow at Young Australians in International Affairs. Alex has served on the Council since 2019. | |

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| |  | | --- | | In addition to our Councillors, we invite 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, our interns Cameron Smith and Niki Beri discuss AUKUS and Britain's current energy and transport crisis.  Disclaimer: The views expressed below by our interns are their own. The Australian Institute of International Affairs New South Wales does not take policy positions. | |

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| |  | | --- | | A group of people on a submarine  Description automatically generated with medium confidence | | [Integrating AUKUS into the Indo-Pacific](https://www.aspistrategist.org.au/integrating-aukus-into-the-indo-pacific/) The new AUKUS partnership is the latest example of the reorientation of American attention to the Indo-Pacific and is both an example and acknowledgement of the loss of US strategic primacy. In this article for The Strategist, Ramesh Thakur [**situates**](https://www.aspistrategist.org.au/integrating-aukus-into-the-indo-pacific/) AUKUS in the plethora of groupings in the region jostling to manage regional affairs. He contends this group risks creating a new subgroup with the Five Eyes arrangement on intelligence sharing, elevating Australia above Canada and New Zealand as a defence ally. Similarly, this partnership will also be questioned by Japan and India, who will reassess the relevance and importance of the Quad.  This has created issues for Australian and the US relations within the wider region and is reinforced with fears that it could spark a regional arms race for nuclear naval propulsion. Thakur also contends that AUKUS plays into ASEAN’S concerns about Southeast Asia becoming a battleground for Sino-US rivalry.  Image Credit: [**U.S. Pacific Fleet**](https://www.flickr.com/photos/compacflt/50909396683/in/photolist-2kyFXYF-bfvQok-xrFuF6-2kytnCD-2hvKqVA-2mvdizs-GQAAC9-2mkZ6L5-QNTpWC-SH3QvN-2kAMq51-2mkXNaP-2m9Gduu-2k41nWT-25d2Yi2-Xsu4BF-25d31jg-2krwHwT-2gawrJQ-LX1d9q-2425gz6-Q6EPcX-25BYGwz-27XssQk-nTomk8-28y4nN6-2mv9Ppt-2mv3mJT-2mv4tnt-8Pi7cr-Fk38oV-2mv8DjZ-UTJUt2-25hwJKS-BTNiT3-2jXwCe2-257UjvT-X8ZwYj-2manvnC-2kyFStr-LUqEm8-2k3XAXW-inCQqC-5TfJKx-2ku4QZE-Rvmfc2-2kyW6uH-26N7MFC-FCj7cy-2kXn1uf) | |

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| |  | | --- | | This article was selected by Cameron Smith. Cameron is a recent Bachelor of Arts (Honours) graduate majoring in History and International Relations at the University of Wollongong. Currently, he is working as an Electorate Officer at the Parliament of Australia and is the Co-Founder and Chief Operations Officer of the Australia-Pacific Youth Dialogue. He has a particular interest in US foreign policy, international security, and grey-zone operations in the Indo-Pacific. | |

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| |  | | --- | | **Marking the International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons**  On 26 September 1983, at half past midnight Moscow time, the world nearly ended. Six weeks later, as the Able Archer military exercises were conducted by NATO, the world nearly ended yet again. Similar events, with incalculable consequences had the wrong decisions been taken, occurred during the Cuban Missile Crisis and in the late 1970s and early 1980s when computerised rehearsals of the apocalypse were accidentally loaded into the main command computer. In one case as a junior officer accidentally sent the launch order to everything in the US nuclear arsenal and did not even know he had done so.  A contemporary version of just how things can go mushroom-shaped right now is portrayed in an [**episode**](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hyFphyoPRS0) of Madame Secretary. The episode is modelled on an event that took place in the early 80s, when a practice tape for WW-III was loaded into a backup computer at STRATCOM and indicated a massive incoming Soviet attack. The man on watch at the Serpukhov-15 satellite surveillance centre on 26 September 1983 was Colonel Stanislav Petrov. His computers indicated that the US had launched. The expectation was that he would alert his superiors, who would 'press a few buttons' and launch between 10,000 and 15,000 large nuclear warheads at the US. He didn't, which is why we are all still here. He later said 'I had a feeling in my gut that there was a mistake somewhere'. Much later on a film was made about him, called 'the man who saved the world'.  September 26 has become the [**International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons**](https://www.un.org/en/observances/nuclear-weapons-elimination-day), instituted by a 2013 General Assembly resolution. The risk of accidental nuclear war is as great as ever with the hands of the [**'doomsday clock'**](https://thebulletin.org/doomsday-clock/current-time/) now at 100 seconds to 'midnight'. A coalition of disarmament and arms control groups operates the [**Global No First Use**](https://nofirstuse.global/)campaign to ensure that, ten or fifteen years down the track, we are all still here to worry about other risks like climate catastrophe and pandemics.  ***John Hallam***  People for Nuclear Disarmament Human Survival Project | |

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