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COMMENTARY AND PROVOCATION

The Institute's seventieth volume: the journal, its origins and its engagement with foreign policy debate

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ABSTRACT

Australian Outlook, published initially in 1947, was Australia's first journal devoted exclusively to the analysis of Australia's foreign relations and of international affairs. It emerged from a context where nationalist and internationalist sentiments were taking on new prominence and in a time of heightened public awareness of global issues. The journal came to provide a unique venue for academic and expert commentary, especially on the international politics of Australia's region, as well as on a wide range of topics from defence and trade to great-power dynamics. Early contributions demonstrated a generally sound—and sometimes remarkably prescient—grasp of regional and international trends. The journal built on earlier Australian Institute of International Affairs publications—notably, the *Austral-Asiatic Bulletin*, inaugurated in 1937.

KEYWORDS

Australian Institute of International Affairs publications; Australian foreign policy analysis; international relations discipline

On March 27, 1947, the Minister of External Affairs, Dr H. V. Evatt, dispatched a telegram to Professor A. H. McDonald to congratulate him, as editor, on the appearance of the first issue of *Australian Outlook*, and promised an article 'in the near future' (AIIA Records, Evatt to McDonald, Box 13, 1.1, Folder 110). While the article from his pen never eventuated, from the first the Australian Institute of International Affairs' (AIIA's) journal attracted attention at the highest reaches of the Australian policy community. In time, ministers of external and then of foreign affairs—notably, Paul Hasluck, Gough Whitlam, Tony Street and Bill Hayden—all published contributions in the years when the journal appeared under this title. This article reviews the journal's origins, early character and forerunners.

The emergence of *Australian Outlook*

Australian Outlook, the immediate predecessor to the *Australian Journal of International Affairs*, emerged from the Australian experience of the wartime years. Quite apart from the physical threat of invasion experienced in 1942, the immense influence of wartime broadcasting and the many educational programs conducted especially by the Army Education

Service vastly stimulated awareness of the vital importance of regional and global issues for national survival and prosperity. Australian determination to help shape the post-war order, and the emergence of internationalist schools of thought focused on the scope and possibilities of that task, impelled new channels of expression (Brown 2005; Cotton 2013b).

The AIIA was far from inactive in the war years (Legge 1999, 79–102). A delegation attended the Eighth Conference of the Institute of Pacific Relations, held at Mont Tremblant, Quebec, in December 1942, and the papers prepared for the conference were published in the USA in 1944 (AIIA 1944); papers were subsequently researched and written for the Institute of Pacific Relations Conference at Hot Springs, Virginia, held in 1945, and for the Third Commonwealth Relations Conference held in London later that same year. Policy essays in a series entitled ‘Australia in a New World’ were also produced. The fact that this work could be completed despite the dislocations of wartime impressed the Rockefeller Foundation, which had provided funding to the Institute under an arrangement initiated before the Pacific conflict. Accordingly, a further application to Rockefeller was successful, with the AIIA receiving a grant for the period 1945–47 of US\$7500 per annum. Carnegie was to step in with more support in 1948 (Legge 1999, 86–91). These funds were intended to facilitate the reorganisation of the Institute, which undertook to establish a new governing Commonwealth Council, as well as a National Office (in place of the former loose federal structure) with a full-time executive officer. In October 1945, the AIIA appointed Molly Kingston, a Sydney lawyer who had been an officer in the Women’s Auxiliary Air Force, to the latter position.

The AIIA rose to the challenge of informing and enriching the public debate on policy—a debate stimulated by a new consciousness of the importance of foreign affairs. In Molly Kingston, the Institute had found a highly committed professional who played no small part in raising the organisation’s profile. She contacted both Chatham House and the Canadian Institute of International Affairs with the intention of learning more about their organisations, including especially their publication programs. It emerged that the Canadians were busy with plans for their own journal—the *International Journal*, appearing in 1946 (AIIA Records, correspondence with Douglas MacLennan, Box 13, 1.1, Folder 111). As the president of the Canadian Institute of International Affairs observed of this new venture:

Canada has a peculiar place in the community of nations and a unique opportunity to make a significant contribution to the cause of international understanding. We have escaped the physical destruction of the past six years; by our contribution to the victory, we have earned a right to be heard; we are so situated as to understand with sympathy both the purposes and the prejudices of the great nations; and, in general, we enjoy the trust and respect of great and small nations alike. Canada has today an opportunity for leadership in world affairs that comes seldom to a nation of twelve million people. But to be able to grasp this opportunity there must be more than action by our political leaders. They must be supported by the informed and thoughtful public opinion of Canadians generally (Fowler 1946, 6).

There is little doubt that such sentiments struck a chord amongst members of the Australian Institute, and with Molly Kingston in particular. Writing in early 1946 to her Canadian counterpart, she informed him that the reorganised Institute was considering ‘taking over ... as a Commonwealth publication’ the review the *Austral-Asiatic Bulletin*, which had been established as an initiative and responsibility of the Victorian Branch in 1937,

and which then had a subscription list of 640 (AIIA Records, Kingston to MacLellan, January 4, 1946, Box 13, 1.1, Folder 111). The *Bulletin* will be discussed further below. The Victorian Branch had offered to continue the responsibilities entailed in its publication in the name of the AIIA, whereas it was Kingston's view that 'all ... publications ... should be published as from the Australian Institute as a whole'. After discussion amongst the Institute's branches, Kingston was able to inform members in December 1946 that the journal would proceed as a national concern. The proposed title had led to some debate, with *International Affairs*, *International Relations* and *Australian Foreign Affairs* all being suggested. Kingston was able to inform members that the title *Australian Outlook*, a suggestion made by Hugh Alexander McClure-Smith, had been adopted on the grounds that it 'has the advantage of including the word Australian and conveying that the journal is a survey of International affairs primarily by Australians from the Australian angle' (AIIA Records, 'Memorandum to Branches', December 2, 1946, Box 13, 1.1, Folder 111). McClure-Smith was then editor of the *Sydney Morning Herald* and later a diplomat (serving ultimately as ambassador in Egypt, the Netherlands and Italy). He may have had in mind a very similar phrase that was first used as the subtitle of a book with which he was undoubtedly familiar: W. Macmahon Ball's (1938) *Press, Radio and World Affairs: Australia's Outlook*, which had been published by the Victorian AIIA in 1938.

On August 17, 1946, the Commonwealth Council formally resolved that publication of *Australian Outlook* would proceed, with Professor Alexander Hugh McDonald of the University of Sydney as editor and the Commonwealth Secretary as associate editor. During the war, McDonald had ably edited *Current Affairs*, issued by the Army Directorate of Education (the predecessor to the *Current Affairs Bulletin* of 1947–98). Instead of AIIA members receiving under special arrangements copies of the Chatham House journal, *International Affairs*, they would instead receive *Australian Outlook* as part of their capitation fee. As the Institute was to characterise the rationale for the new journal: 'The purpose of the "Australian Outlook" is to provide a vehicle for the publication of Australian views on international affairs in general and in particular on those topics which are of special significance to Australia' (AIIA 1947, 63–64).

Richard Boyer, the AIIA president, summed up the expectations for the new journal in the following terms:

international affairs have ceased to be the sole preserve of foreign offices and specially trained diplomats, and have become not only the concern but the responsibility of the people of the world, and most directly of ... the democracies. Public opinion in democratic procedure finds its way inevitably and powerfully into the conduct of foreign affairs ... and we are seeing day by day the growing impact of public opinion upon history-making decisions. ... None of us can avoid making judgments on current international affairs, nor, indeed, can we evade exerting our influence through our governmental representative. ... If we are to make the leadership of the democracies effective, and to arm our governments with adequate support for wise and noble policies, it is important that we recognise that international affairs are enormously involved and require more than passing thought for adequate judgment. It is to aid this objective that the Institute of International Affairs was originally brought into being ... [in] 1919–1920. ... We are now in a similar and even more urgent position ... It is ... [to further] this purpose, as well as to serve its own membership, that the Commonwealth Council of the Australian Institute of International Affairs has decided to launch this journal (Boyer 1947, 4–5).

As to Australia's role, Boyer concluded with an observation that was to become a commonplace of the middle-power approach to Australian foreign policy of later decades: 'Australia's influence is, and must be, more than commensurate with the size of her population, and it is urgent that that influence should be wisely and nobly exerted' (Boyer 1947, 5).

The journal's perspective in its early numbers

The first editor, Alexander Hugh McDonald, was Professor of Ancient History at the University of Sydney and a noted specialist on Roman history, and especially the historian Livy. A New Zealander and Cambridge PhD, he moved back to Cambridge in 1952, but subsequently retired to Perth (Ward 1979). A specialist in ancient civilisations he may have been, but McDonald's industry and erudition were extraordinary. In a masterful two-part study, he reviewed developments in the South-East Asian nations (McDonald 1947, 1948); he later recounted his personal observations—having once studied in Germany—of the aftermath of the war in Europe (McDonald 1949a), and also commented on Korea. He also edited a book—the outcome of a timely AIIA research project—on the future of trusteeship in the Pacific (McDonald 1949b). No less impressive was the intellectual reach and authority of J. M. Ward, who assumed control as editor in 1948 (a position he relinquished in 1953). Though principally a historian of Australia and the Empire, Ward also wrote on the Pacific and on Japan.

What were the most prominent concerns of the *Australian Outlook* of the late 1940s? The formation of the South Pacific Commission (from 1997 the Pacific Community) under the Canberra Agreement of 1947—an important internationalist initiative of the Chifley government—and its implications for regional economic and social development was the focus of the journal's first issue, which was thus also the first special issue. Japan, international organisation, defence, South-East Asia and the great powers were the major topics covered by writers in the earliest issues, with the largest concentration of papers on South-East Asia and the South-East Asian nations. In all cases, these issues were considered as they affected Australian policy. In the first three years, while there were three papers on Indian topics, and the Asian Relations conference of 1947 in New Delhi received very considerable attention, there was no article on China. The first, which appeared in the second issue of 1951, was authored by H. Owen Chapman, and its argument speedily engendered a riposte from Sir Frederic Eggleston (as will be seen).

Academic writers were by far the most important group amongst *Australian Outlook* authors. Their style, however, differed considerably from that seen in the contemporary journal. While some made detailed reference to the academic literature of the day—Pacific historian Jim Davidson's (1947) review of writing on the Pacific is perhaps the most striking example—many referred sparingly, if indeed sometimes at all, to other writers. Pieces also varied considerably in length, from relatively brief observations on recent developments to extended works of analysis. Overall, the most common feature, in an era well before the speedy communications possible by the 1970s (and a world away from today's Internet), was essays that analysed recent trends on the basis of radio reports and international wire services as reported in daily newspapers. Neither was this material refereed in the manner that has become the practice, ever more exactingly pursued, from the 1980s. However, the editor or his associates—in effect his deputies

in the various Institute branches—very frequently sought the opinions of specialists before accepting material.

Despite the sometimes slim and often selective evidence base for *Australian Outlook's* writing and commentary, these early examples of the Institute's analysis typically evinced an enviable vigour and clarity.

In his writing on 'political development' in South-East Asia in 1947, McDonald (1947, 1948) detected common themes in the tentative character of the political institutions established by the various colonial powers before the Pacific War, and the exploitation of the form, but not the substance, of national independence by the Japanese occupiers. He could see no prospect of a return to the colonial status quo ante, nor did he consider that the new concessions made by the French and the Dutch in their territories would be sufficient, but he foresaw many problems ahead for orderly transitions to statehood. If some Australians were slow to comprehend the demise of regional colonialism, the journal was not.

On Japan, Ward, Norman Harper, Macmahon Ball and then Rupert Ryan all agreed on the extent of the reforms enacted under the tutelage of General MacArthur, but it was left to Macmahon Ball (1948) to warn of the presence still of anti-democratic forces and structures that fluctuating US policy had not addressed. Considering the economic dimension, Harper argued that a stable Japan with a viable local economy was essential for regional stability and would thus serve Australia's interests. He therefore recommended that Australia should restore trading links with Japan (Harper 1947)—a proposal that anticipated the 1957 trade treaty with Tokyo by a decade.

But Australians could not necessarily expect an easy entry into a transformed region. From the perspective of a participant in the New Delhi Asian Relations conference, Gerald Packer—a businessman, air force intelligence veteran and Institute stalwart—perceived an extensive and pervasive 'anti-foreign' attitude in evidence in its proceedings. Accordingly, he predicted that Australia could not escape from being identified with the former colonial powers:

despite the restraint of responsible leaders, the pan-Asian sentiment expressed by many delegates was essentially a repudiation of the possible merits and unquestionable achievements of the Western world, of whose civilisation the Australian people are members. Private expressions of goodwill and friendship towards Australia need to be viewed against this broader background (Packer 1947b, 5).

Packer (1947a, 36) was also forthright enough, in his work on defence, to point out that in the age of the atomic bomb the notion that the British Empire constituted Australia's principal defence community was obsolete.

Economist and government adviser H. D. Black, who had been a prominent wartime broadcaster and was to assume the editorship of *Australian Outlook* in 1953, presented a two-part analysis of the relations between the major powers. The circumstances that led to the advent of the Truman Doctrine and the Marshall Plan, and the reception of these initiatives by the Soviet leadership, indicated that the differences between the two major powers were fundamentally irreconcilable. He further held that this outcome, in retrospect, was largely the result of their wartime strategies (Black 1947, 1948). While a commonplace today, this analysis of 1947—at a time when the Minister of External Affairs, H. V. Evatt, was endeavouring to manoeuvre Australia into the position of intermediary between the great powers (Waters 1996, 78–81)—demonstrated acute judgement.

Harper also pointed to the irreversible changes in the configuration of regional power. The USA, he argued, had become not only the world's industrial giant, but also in Asia 'an expanding imperial state'; at the same time, he concluded that, being in irreversible decline, Britain henceforth 'will be unable to play a permanent and major role in the balance of Pacific power' (Harper 1947, 16). Similarly, Gordon Greenwood (1947b) maintained that now the USA and Soviet Russia were shaping as antagonists, the British and their associates would be bound to become part of a larger contest. If Australia's movement towards strategic engagement with the USA was hesitant until the mid-1950s, AIIA writers clearly foretold its likely progress.

Similarly, the emergence of a struggle of rival ideologies was correctly anticipated. A learned piece contributed by 'A' (1950) analysed the struggle between communism and the West in ideological terms. Adopting an original viewpoint, it suggested that, with the affirming of cooperative and transnational forms of welfare and improvement in Western Europe, the standard communist criticisms of capitalism as relentlessly individualistic were now obsolete. Accordingly, the communist movement could now be placed on the ideological defensive by the leaders of the West.

On China, the factors that led to the formation of the People's Republic in October 1949 stimulated sharp disagreement. H. Owen Chapman (1951), the author of the first commentary on China in *Australian Outlook*, had been an Australian medical missionary of more than two decades' experience. In the following number of the journal, his views were sharply rebutted by Eggleston, who would not allow that the Chinese communists represented a movement with interests distinct from those of the USSR, and was also insistent that they were parties from the first in encouraging and backing Pyongyang's Soviet-inspired strategy in the Korean War. Eggleston could certainly draw on his own conversations while in Chongqing (Chungking) with communist leaders—notably Zhou Enlai—but his suggestion that Chapman was uninformed was puzzling, given that he was well aware that Chapman had published a well-regarded eyewitness book on the Chinese revolution of 1927 (Chapman 1928, ix; Eggleston 1951). In retrospect, Chapman's view that the triumph of the Chinese Communist Party was a consequence of an indigenous upsurge of anti-colonial and anti-Western sentiment appears better founded than Eggleston's critical remarks.

In commentary on an impressive range of topics, however, Eggleston's penetrating intellect produced many sage observations. While hopeful for the longer-term future of international institutions, in an extended analysis of the United Nations Charter, he was critical of its provisions because it established a global organisation ultimately subject to the policy preferences intended or resisted by the (veto-wielding) great powers. The predominant but ill-defined role of the Security Council, essentially unchecked by the General Assembly, implied that if the great powers colluded, smaller nations might be ignored, whereas if they disagreed, a global policy might never emerge (Eggleston 1947a, 1947b, 1947c). The prescience of this assessment should be understood in light of the fact that, in 1947–48, the Cold War was still in its nascent phase. In an article-length review of Bernard Brodie's path-breaking work—with Arnold Wolfers and W. T. R. Fox—on the atomic bomb, Eggleston (1947d) saw at once that the world was now entering a new era of 'bipolarity'. Given that Soviet Russia would likely soon possess nuclear weapons, the overwhelming purpose of the most advanced weaponry would henceforth be as a 'deterrent' rather than as a means of waging war.

Without using the term ‘middle power’—a novel Canadian concept that had only very recently been applied to Australia by Eggleston—Greenwood put his finger on the potential, as well as the inherent limitations, of Australian policy. In an era dominated as never before by global connections and concerns, nations such as Australia were more favourably located in a world characterised by settled regimes rather than by contests of power: ‘if you have an internationally regulated world, Australia will be in a position to play a much more prominent part than would actually be warranted by her resources or power’ (Greenwood 1947a, 55).

Contributors and readers

The earliest issues of *Australian Outlook* were dominated—though not monopolised—by the contributions of academics. In addition to the abovementioned, their ranks included a number of individuals who would become major figures in the field, including J. D. B. Miller, A. G. L. Shaw, Henry Mayer and Hugo Wolfsohn. The AIIA, however, was an organisation then (as now) embracing a group concerned with foreign policy that extended well beyond the universities. Thus, authors also came from other fields, including journalism (Delamere Usher, Joseph Leyser), the law (Norman Cowper, Keith Aickin), business (Gerald Packer, Tristan Buesst, E. C. Dyason) and government service (Eric Ward, P. C. Greenland, L. F. Crisp). As befitted his status as the most prominent foreign policy intellectual of his generation, Frederic Eggleston—variously lawyer, politician, public servant, diplomatic envoy and academic analyst—was the most prolific of the authors.

Although much commentary was devoted to Asia, the expertise of the writers did not match that which is more usual today. Nevertheless, Tom Inglis Moore, for example, though he was an Oxford-trained literary scholar and historian, had taught in the University of the Philippines from 1928–31; the China experience of Chapman and Eggleston has been noted; Macmahon Ball, whose first article on Japan appeared in *Australian Outlook* in 1948, had been British Commonwealth representative (and for a short period concurrently Australian minister to Tokyo) on the Allied Council in Japan, and had also conducted government missions in South-East Asia; Constance Duncan, who wrote on Korea, as will be discussed below, had first-hand familiarity with the country; and Geoffrey Sawyer, who contributed an early piece on post-war South-East Asia, was born in Burma.

The appearance of *Australian Outlook* owed much to the organisational vision and drive of Molly Kingston. She became assistant editor of the journal at its inception, and played an active role in its early evolution, corresponding with such personal friends as Paul Hasluck to canvass the best possible material for inclusion. Its contributors, nonetheless, were overwhelmingly men. Yet, despite the pervasive patriarchy of the time, the earliest issues did contain some pieces by women.

The first woman to write a full article for *Australian Outlook* was Helen Wright (1948), who, in the first issue for 1948, offered a succinct and insightful piece on the situation in Yugoslavia. Her analysis was based on first-hand experience on the staff of the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration, where she had been caught in emerging Cold War tensions. Having served in the Australian army as a linguist—putting her experience in Germany and Italy in 1938, while still a student at the University of Melbourne, to good effect—she was posted to Yugoslavia and subsequently worked in Paris

and Berlin (Ferber 2006). Later, as Helen Ferber, she became a noted social scientist at the Melbourne Institute of Applied Economics and Social Research, and was appointed a Member of the Order of Australia in 2010, in part for her international career. In the same number, Pacific historian Dorothy Crozier contributed a book review. The second full article by a woman appeared in the third issue for 1948, where Nancy Robson (1948) wrote, in 'Representation in French Oceania', on French plans to introduce limited representative institutions in its Pacific territories. Robson was a linguist and had worked as a translator for the Australian government at major international conferences. She contributed on the Pacific to subsequent issues of *Australian Outlook*; much later she was to become the second Lady Kerr.

These essays were followed by one of the best pieces that appeared in *Australian Outlook* in its earliest years—that by Constance Duncan (1950) on Korea. Duncan was an exceptional talent—Japanese linguist, broadcaster, peace activist and refugee champion—and had first travelled to Korea in 1922 (Warne 2011). Her experience as a member of the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration in Korea, which included her visit to Pyongyang in 1946 to assess social and economic conditions in the North, gave her an unrivalled familiarity with the subject. She was even able to draw on conversations in Seoul with veteran patriot Kim Kyu-sik (vice-president of the Provisional Republic until 1947), during which he regaled her with stories of meeting Billy Hughes in Paris in 1919. She outlined with great historical accuracy the background to the division of Korea and the creation of the two antagonistic regimes on the peninsula as a consequence, in large part, of the occupying powers being unable to formulate any agreed course for the nation.

With the resignation of Molly Kingston and then, in 1951, the move of the federal secretariat to Melbourne, the journal continued its early momentum. From a circulation of 1476 in February 1948, by 1951 this number had increased to 1867 (AIIA Records, 'Australian Outlook', 1.3, Box 33). By this time, *Australian Outlook* had clearly become an authoritative source for informed Australian opinion. For Institute members, it was the in-house journal of record. In addition to the copies that went to the other Chatham House institutions, 38 copies made their way to the USA. Their recipients included the leading university and colleges libraries, as well as such scholars as Gwendolen Carter, Hartley Grattan, Werner Levi, Alfred Zimmern and, interestingly, Ian Milner (then working for the United Nations in New York) (AIIA Records, 'Australian Outlook', 1.3, Box 33).

Forerunners of the journal

However, the advent of *Australian Outlook* is far from the first episode in the story of AIIA publications. Quite apart from its many books and other items (the first in 1928), though the Institute is celebrating a seventieth volume, this occasion is also at least an eightieth anniversary. To follow this story requires some reference to the historical context.

'International relations' as a distinct area of concern and also as an academic discipline emerged in the 1920s (Cotton 2013a). Initially, Australian book-length contributions were few, and Australian writing in periodicals in this field was sparse, with examples found in a variety of publications. The Workers' Educational Association journal, the *Australian Highway* (from 1919), published a few items. The first specialist journal in economics,

the *Economic Record* (1925), included material with an international character, especially on trade, tariffs, industrialisation and population. The *Australian Quarterly* (1929), subtitled *A Quarterly Review of Australian Politics* and sponsored by the Institute of Political Science, focused mostly on domestic policy issues, but occasional essays on international issues did appear in its pages, the first being by major AIIA figure Professor William Harrison Moore (1929), who discussed his fieldwork in Geneva and his experiences as a delegate to the League of Nations Assembly. In the early 1930s, the *Australian League of Nations Bulletin* also sometimes carried a few analytical pieces.

But while members of the AIIA (formed in 1933 from branches that had been originally organised in 1924–25) received copies of the Chatham House journal *International Affairs* (published under this title from 1931), and a few Australian authors contributed to such journals as *The Round Table* and *Foreign Affairs*, as well as to *International Affairs* itself, Australia lacked a specialist journal devoted to international affairs and foreign policy. As ever, resources were scarce, and the Australian international policy community was dispersed by geography (often augmented by a rivalry of localities). These problems were recognised by Edward C. E. Dyason—stockbroker, engineer and enthusiast for ideas—who was the Institute’s most important benefactor. Dyason’s fascination with international issues had led, in 1929, to the establishment in Melbourne, largely with his own funds, of a ‘Bureau of Social and International Affairs’, the secretarial and research resources of which supported not only the Victorian Branch of the Institute, but also the Institute of Pacific Relations and the Victorian League of Nations Union (Buesst 1949; Eggleston 1950).

In 1936, as Dyason’s interests and those of his close associates in the Victorian Branch became more closely focused on Asia, he sponsored the Austral-Asiatic Section, a vehicle which was intended not only to facilitate work in the Victorian Institute on Asia and the Pacific, but also to collect library and other resources on the region. It should be recalled that 1936 was the year of the trade diversion dispute, with the politically disastrous and economically maladroit policy of trade discrimination against Japan adopted by the Lyons government generating deep Japanese enmity (as well as seriously offending the USA, whose interests were also affected, with Washington withdrawing ‘most favoured nation’ status from Australian exports as a result). Undeterred, Dyason travelled to the USA to secure support from the Carnegie Corporation for the growing library in his Section, and also to initiate contacts with the Rockefeller Foundation, which later bore fruit (as has been noted) in a series of important grants for AIIA activities (Cotton 2012).

In order to raise the profile of the Victorian Branch and also the new Section, Dyason encouraged the foundation of a new journal dedicated to the analysis of international affairs. With Frederic Eggleston (who was to become Australia’s first minister to China in 1941) serving as chairman of the editorial board, and with the collaboration of Macmahon Ball, P. D. Phillips and Ernest Scott, the Victorian Branch of the AIIA brought out the first number of the *Austral-Asiatic Bulletin* in April 1937. The extent of Dyason’s commitment may be judged by the fact that, in 1939–40, through his personal efforts, £1044 (a considerable sum in those days) was raised for the Victorian AIIA and especially for the publication of the *Austral-Asiatic Bulletin* (Eggleston Papers, 15, 423/15/52–54).

The starting point for the debate that the journal sought to encourage may be judged by the remarks in the editorial of the first number:

'The Austral-Asiatic Bulletin', concerned as it is to review and comment upon current opinion regarding the Orient, does not espouse the easy solution of international problems—that of finding a scapegoat and assigning him to the wilderness. It is committed to the wider but less easy task of ascertaining the facts and summing up the evidence.

The Australian Institute of International Affairs ... is forbidden by its Constitution to pass judgment, but unless discussion is to become unreal and de-vitalized, complete freedom must be granted to informed personal opinion. Only thus can Australia become better acquainted with and more curious about the Orient, of which she is a part. Only thus can the neighbour nations understand her better.

For we are neighbours and, we hope, good neighbours. While it is necessary for neighbours to examine facts and consider interests these are wider than those which distil from insular prejudice or political strategy on either side of the Equator (*AAB 1937*).

Clearly the notion that Australia might become or was already an Asian country long preceded the era of Paul Keating (or even of Menzies), having its supporters in the 1930s. As the subtext of the editorial remarks clearly implied, relations with Japan were the most important focus of the *Austral-Asiatic Bulletin*, but its contents ranged widely, from the Pacific, to the USA, to New Zealand, to questions of defence; a regular column was devoted to trade issues. It published both Australian and international commentary. Although its local authors were generally of a liberal persuasion, even at the height of appeasement, criticism of the lack of forethought of current government policy was not lacking. In early 1938, for example, P.D. Phillips (1938, 12), one of the Institute's most influential commentators, pointed out that although reliance on the Empire was inescapable from a defence point of view, the extent of support in a crisis was likely to be less than was sometimes supposed, and there was a need consequently for Australia to adopt a policy of 'vigorous self-reliance'. The journal appeared—with some interruptions at the height of the war years—until 1946.

In 1940, W. D. Forsyth (who was to become one of Australia's most distinguished diplomats) joined the publication group as a research officer and became responsible for the production of what began as a supplement to the journal: *The Digest of Far Eastern Periodicals*. This was based on some 40 magazines and newspapers, and was quite the best source then available on contemporary trends in the Asia-Pacific region. Forsyth later recorded that its appearance was not without controversy:

We scored an amusing hit early in 1941. Towards the end of 1940 the data and views we were culling from the English-language press of Japan and the region, reflected by UK and American sources, suggested a clear possibility of Japan entering the war, and this digest material was the basis of an article on that unwelcome possibility published in the AA Bulletin with copious extracts from our sources. That issue was banned in Tokyo (where we had quite a list of subscribers). The trepidation I suffered before the next Board meeting was happily dissolved by Eggleston's chuckling remark as he opened the meeting that we had really made the grade in being banned by a totalitarian military regime ... Incidentally, one of the extracts predicted, about twelve months in advance, the strategy and tactics of Japan's conquest of Malaya and Singapore (Forsyth Papers, 15, Box 70, 19.4a).

The journal very much reflected the ethos of the Victorian Branch. As Forsyth recalled, Eggleston was the 'philosopher, mentor and guide of the editorial board' (Forsyth Papers, 15, Box 70, 15.17; Forsyth 1974).

As the AIIA revived its activities following the end of hostilities, the Victorian Branch resumed publication of the *Austral-Asiatic Bulletin*. After internal discussions, the

editorial chairman, P. D. Phillips, suggested to the Commonwealth Council that the journal become a production of the Institute as a national body—and thus financed and distributed as a national concern—though with the Victorian group still providing the editorial focus. The decision was taken instead to begin anew, and the appointment of McDonald as editor undoubtedly reflected the fact that the revived National Office was now located in Sydney. Nevertheless, the final issue of the *Austral-Asiatic Bulletin* referred to *Australian Outlook* as a ‘reincarnation’ that was to ‘improve upon the trail marked’ by its predecessor (AAB 1946, 70). As the ‘Institute Notes’ observed:

The major development in the work of the Institute during the year has been the publication of ‘The Australian Outlook’ as the official journal of the Institute. The journal incorporates the ‘Austral Asiatic Bulletin’ which was published by the Victorian Branch from 1937–1946 and which attained a considerable degree of success both in Australia and abroad. The reputation and goodwill built up by the ‘Austral Asiatic Bulletin’ have contributed in no small measure to the successful launching of the Institute journal (AIIA 1947, 63–64).

Until volume 5 (1951), *Australian Outlook* carried the phrase ‘Incorporating *The Austral-Asiatic Bulletin*’ at its masthead. There was a further continuity. Just as Dyason had been the leading force in the earlier journal, so in February 1947 the Commonwealth Council minutes recorded that he had donated £200 towards the cost of the launch of *Australian Outlook* (AIIA Records, 1.1, Box 13, Fold 111, Commonwealth Council 15 February 1947).

Epilogue

In time, the question of the most appropriate title came up again and, in 1990 (volume 44), the journal adopted its current name, carrying the further caption: *The Journal of the Australian Institute of International Affairs Incorporating Australian Outlook*. However, as befits a publication which had strived to bring an informed perspective to the events and controversies of the time, in 2015 the *Australian Outlook* title was revived, this time for the AIIA’s Internet blog on international affairs. The Institute’s commitment to the deepening of public awareness of foreign affairs has been coterminous with its history. In 2016, the Institute celebrates a seventieth volume with a history of 80 years.

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