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The New Australian Militarism: Undermining our Future Security

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capability in place, which is not officially acknowledged by the Japanese government. Friedman and Le Bard contend that the Japanese have retained this capability in critical defense technologies such as main battle tanks, advanced fighter technology, and in licensing Aegis technology (though it was cheaper to purchase it elsewhere), and they believe it is kept as a hedge against time should the United States and Japan part company.

Friedman and Le Bard have presented a thought-provoking argument that skeptics should not ignore. If Shintaro Ishihara in Japan, and politicians in the United States and Europe, continue in their ugly culture bashing, this work may indeed prove predictive.

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Cheeseman, Graeme and Kettle, St. John, eds. *The New Australian Militarism: Undermining our Future Security*. Leichhardt, New South Wales: Pluto Press Australia, Ltd., 1990. 231pp. \$18.99

Upon reading the title of this book and reviewing its contents, it is easy to see why serious students of security studies may dismiss this compendium of essays as yet another "silly" diatribe against contemporary Western security.

There is no question that this text is an ad hominem polemic against the defense modernization program,

known to this group as "militarism," that was initiated by the former Australian minister for defence, Kim Beazley (albeit the editors have wisely included a rejoinder by Mr. Beazley). With one exception—Cheeseman's excellent and balanced critique of Australian defense policy—Beazley is vilified for his efforts to modernize the Australian Defence Force (A.D.F.) and to reform its (until recently) ill-coordinated planning structure. One can assume that because most of the contributors to this text are members of the Australian political far left and "peace movement" they must feel a strong sense of betrayal, since it has been a Labor Party government which has overseen the reequipment of the A.D.F.

There is an amazing essay written by Chris Tremewan about how New Zealand is allegedly affected by Australia's defense modernization program. He has written what can only be described as the most vitriolic (if not paranoic) polemic against European cultural values I have ever read. For example, "The recent heavy Australian pressure to purchase Australian-made frigates [N.B., all of two, with an option for two more] is seen by many New Zealanders as a political move by Australia and the United States to counter the possibility of Aotearoa [the Maori word for New Zealand—very "Politically Correct"] taking an independent political path." In essence, the entire South Pacific and Southeast Asian region are at serious risk due to Kim

Beazley's envisaged goal of improving Australia's ability to defend itself.

The proposed solution to this litany of the militaristic threats to this serene and tranquil region is that Australia adopt a security policy stressing "just defense" and the Palme Commission's concept of "common security." Therefore, any offensive military capabilities would be abandoned, and, in the words of Peter King, Australia's security would be achieved by diplomatic, political, and moral means. And, oh yes!—all security treaties would be abrogated, and the U.S.–Australian joint intelligence and communications facilities in that country would be closed.

In view of this work's obvious political tilt, it can be expected that many are likely to dismiss it. But I would counsel to the contrary. Fortunately, with minor exceptions, these authors currently neither have a modicum of influence nor are they likely ever to reach positions where their views would hold sway; however, we ignore their efforts and messages at our peril. The authors have displayed considerable endurance over the years arguing their vision for Australian security.

The arguments in this text should not be rejected as insignificant but rather taken seriously, and read by anyone interested in U.S. alliance relations. To ignore the serious potential challenge put forth by these groups throughout the Western alliance and not dispute their arguments

vigorously, and publicly, is to lend them credibility by default.

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Robinson, Linda. *Intervention or Neglect: The United States and Central America beyond the 1980s*. New York: Council on Foreign Relations, 1991. 223pp. \$14.95

Not since Howard Wiarda's 1984 *Rift and Revolution: The Central American Imbroglia* has an author so effectively captured the essence of U.S. foreign policy options in Central America. Reading like the best effort of a seasoned Latin American diplomat or C.I.A. station chief, Robinson's book explores the key historical, economic, political, and military events that have shaped present day Nicaragua, El Salvador, and Panama. Her reporting of the origins of these crises and her balanced portrayal of the errors in judgement of both Central and North American decision makers is especially noteworthy.

Robinson's discussion on Nicaragua builds upon the definitive work of Shirley Christian on the Sandinista revolution, *Nicaragua: Revolution in the Family*. Robinson offers an excellent presentation on the Sandinistas, the Contras, and the interaction between the U.S. and Central American soldiers and diplomats. But this reviewer takes issue with the author's assessment that the Contras played only a minimal role, as catalyst. She has played down the arrogance which