Security, prosperity and resilience

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Abstract

The concept of security is changing. It now has as much to do with clean water, reliable food supplies and individual and community well-being as with the ability of the state to protect its sovereignty against threats from other states. Prosperity and security now go hand in hand and neither is achievable without the other. In the 21st century, national security must transcend defence and law enforcement systems to include resilience and social inclusion, the protection of rights and the promotion of values. To see terrorism as an attack on the state is to misconceive it: terrorism is really an attack on the values that unite the community in common purpose. A key resilience challenge for Australia is to build these changing concepts of security into our national governance.

Introduction

Since Federation, 'security' and 'prosperity' have existed in entirely different chapters of the national political lexicon. The Treasurer, together with the industry ministers, have been responsible for delivering prosperity, while the Defence Minister, with the occasional assistance of the Foreign Minister and the Attorney-General, has been responsible for delivering security. And ne'er the twain have met, except to the extent that security makes prosperity possible and prosperity makes security affordable. Yet there is a growing realisation that security and prosperity are inextricably linked, since neither is achievable without the other.

Australian security policy

For the most part, Australian security policy has reflected a concentration on the principles advocated by the so-called 'Realist' school of international relations, articulated principally by Hans Morgenthau (1967) in his monumental *Politics among Nations: The Struggle for Power and Peace*. While Morgenthau did not devote much time to a systematic consideration of security – he was much more preoccupied with 'power' – it is clear that the basic premise on which his analysis depends (apart, of course, from the assumption that there is always a rational basis on which international power relationships are struck) is the enduring nature of the Treaty of Westphalia in defining the relationships between states.

    To the extent that he does refer to 'security', Morgenthau appears to accept that security means 'the defence of the frontiers as . . . established by peace treaties'. (p. 299). This essentially