New Zealand Refuses to Accuse China of "Genocide"

New Zealand increasingly finds itself straddling East and West, balancing between participation in the rise of Asia and a strong economic partnership with China and pressure placed on it by the West, the United States and United Kingdom in particular, and their common goal of encircling and containing China.

This balancing act was highlighted again recently when New Zealand's Parliament voted on a statement regarding allegations surrounding Xinjiang, China.

The motion was pushed forward by the highly unpopular ACT Party which holds only 10 out of 120 seats in New Zealand's parliament. The original draft proposed by ACT characterized the situation in Xinjiang as a "genocide."

Reuters would report in its article, "New Zealand parliament says Uyghur rights abuses taking place in China," that:

New Zealand's parliament unanimously declared on Wednesday that severe human rights abuses were taking place against Uyghur people in China's Xinjiang region, spurring the Chinese embassy to decry the move as interference in internal affairs. All parties discussed and supported a motion by New Zealand's smaller ACT Party, but only after it was revised to drop the word "genocide" from the text.

Removing the word "genocide" from the text is an important part of New Zealand's balancing act.
China was obligated to condemn the motion nonetheless, because however out-of-step New Zealand's Parliament might be with the other "Five Eyes" nations (the US, Canada, UK and Australia), accusations of "severe human rights abuses" are still unfounded, constituting part of a US-driven propaganda war waged against China.

**New Zealand's Balancing Act**

New Zealand's government may have multiple reasons for breaking with the US and its Western allies.

For one, there is no genocide taking place in China's Xinjiang region.

Accusations made by the US have been thoroughly exposed as deliberate fabrications. US government funded "rights groups" based not in Xinjiang, but in Washington D.C. serve as the source for the bulk of these accusations. Upon closer scrutiny, accusations have either been exposed as baseless, lacking any actual evidence at all, or exposed as verified fabrications.

There is also the fact that the US-led propaganda war regarding Xinjiang echoes similar campaigns aimed at Iraq in 2003 regarding so-called "weapons of mass destruction" which did not exist and that the US knew did not exist.

The resulting war and occupation (which continues to this day) has killed over 1 million people, destroyed or otherwise disrupted the lives of millions more and has directly contributed to the region's continued instability to present day. This has, among many other things, irrevocably undermined Western credibility upon the global stage.

The US likewise fabricated claims of human rights abuses in both Libya and Syria to serve as a pretext for US military intervention in both nations from 2011 onward. Libya was destroyed and has long ceased to exist as a functioning nation-state. Syria has suffered protracted war and now sees a third of its territory (where its oil and wheat production is located) occupied by US forces.

Thus, New Zealand, by signing on to baseless claims of "genocide" in Xinjiang would be adding itself to the list of nations aiding and abetting in what is merely the latest chapter of US aggression predicated on false pretexts and against an adversary New Zealand depends on economically.

Thirdly, New Zealand may have considered what the geopolitical landscape of both the Indo-Pacific and the wider world might look like in 10 years' time.

It will almost certainly be one centered on Eurasia, not the United States and Western Europe. It is a geopolitical (and also economic) landscape that New Zealand stands to benefit from greatly, but only if it maintains constructive ties within the Indo-Pacific region where it is actually located, rather than maintaining obedience to Anglo-American interests as part of its Anglo-American legacy.

In other words, New Zealand is not really picking between East and West. It is picking instead between the past and the future.

It faces a past of Western imperialism up to and including modern day military aggression and economic hegemony the US and its close allies predicate on the very sort of unfounded claims New Zealand has been pressured to repeat regarding Xinjiang, China. And a future where New Zealand lives in an Indo-Pacific region driven by cooperation and constructive ties that have replaced Western-driven conflicts seeking to both divide and conquer as well as encircle and contain Asia and especially China.

The US and its allies will undoubtedly continue pressuring New Zealand to adopt a decidedly anti-Chinese foreign policy and to add its weight behind US meddling along China's peripheries, not so much because New Zealand has a lot to contribute by doing so, but instead (and more importantly) because if New Zealand doesn't, it stands to set a precedent of pivoting from the Western-dominated "international order" and contributing toward the emergence and prevalence of multipolarism.

*Joseph Thomas is chief editor of Thailand-based geopolitical journal, The New Atlas and contributor to the online magazine New Eastern Outlook.*