



GOVERNMENT HOUSE  
SYDNEY

## Speech

Her Excellency the Honourable Margaret Beazley AC KC  
Governor of New South Wales

### **Celebration of 135<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Royal United Services Institute** for Defence and Security Studies NSW

28 August 2023

Government House

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*Bujari gamarruwa*

*Diyin Babana Gamarada Gadigal Ngura*

I greet you in the language of the Gadigal, Traditional Owners of this land at Government House and pay my respects to their Elders past, present, and emerging.

It is wonderful to welcome you to this celebration of the 135<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Royal United Services Institute for Defence and Security Studies NSW.

Henry Kissinger - who is, indeed, 100! - wrote in his 1994, book, *Diplomacy*: “Intellectuals analyse the operations of international systems; statesmen build them. And there is a vast difference between the perspective of an analyst and that of a statesman ... (E)xamining how statesmen have dealt with the problem of world order - what worked or failed and why - is not the end of understanding contemporary diplomacy, though it may be its beginning.”

This comment by the former US Secretary of State<sup>1</sup> reflects something of the contemporary *raison d’être* of the Royal United Services Institute NSW. It certainly reflects the significance of the Institute’s recent 4<sup>th</sup> *International Defence & Security Dialogue*, held in May at Parliament House, which explored one of the most challenging geopolitical issues of our time: ‘*Managing Strategic Tensions in the Indo – Pacific Region*’.

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<sup>1</sup> 1973-1977, also National Security Advisor 1969-73

Indeed, it also reflects the even longer history of the United Service Institution in the United Kingdom which was founded to be to be 'a bridge between the military and civil society'.<sup>2</sup> That connection between the 'military' and the 'civil' is important. National security has never been simply about protecting borders – important, as that is – it is about leadership and governance; it is about training and education; ethics, culture and society.

This is something that the then United Service Institution of NSW presaged back in 1888 when founded by Major General John Soame Richardson, with Lord Carrington, 16th Governor of NSW,<sup>3</sup> as Patron, to promote: "the higher professional education of officers."<sup>4</sup> Today, this legacy endures with the Institute's links to the Australian Defence Force. Notably, this year's Dialogue was well-supported by serving Australian Defence Force personnel, including RAN Fleet Command, HMAS *Watson*, HQ Forces Command, HQ 2<sup>nd</sup> Division and HQ Air Command.

There can be no more representative an embodiment of the connection between the 'military' and the 'civil' than the Institute's founder, Major General Richardson, Commandant of the Military Forces of New South Wales, and Lord Carrington as its Patron.

Major General Richardson served as a lieutenant at the siege and fall of Sebastopol in the Crimea, and notably, as leader of the NSW contingent of soldiers to the Soudan in 1885. I understand this morning a small ceremony was conducted at his cliffside gravesite at Waverley Cemetery to honour him and Professor Hough (Michael) may say more, so let me speak briefly about Lord Carrington, first Patron of the Institute and 16<sup>th</sup> Governor of New South Wales.

Governor Carrington – whose portrait you see as you enter the Main Hall here at Government House – was far from having a military background.



*Portrait of Governor Carrington by Julian Ashton CBE (1890), Government House*

Descended from a landowning banking family, whose closest contact to a battlefield was to provide financial advice to the British Government during the Napoleonic Wars, he was a parliamentarian, who had served as Captain of the Corps of Gentlemen-at-Arms<sup>5</sup> and Aide-de-Camp to the Prince of Wales. He arrived in the colony as Governor of New South Wales at a time of great factionalism. Amid febrile discussions about Home Rule and Federation, he managed to quell rising tensions on both sides, particularly showing skilful diplomacy in making representations to the Governors of Victoria and South Australia and paving the way for Henry Parkes' Federation Conference of 1890.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>2</sup> <https://rusinsw.org.au/site/History.php#NSWR>

<sup>3</sup> 1885-1890

<sup>4</sup> Inaugural address, Richardson, 1890, in: <https://rusinsw.org.au/site/History.php>

<sup>5</sup> *The Governors of New South Wales 1788-2010*, eds Clune and Turner, Federation Press, page 333

<sup>6</sup> <https://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/carrington-charles-robert-3169>

Together these two - Richardson and Carrington - with their respective military and civilian expertise, steered the nascent United Service Institution of NSW in its objectives, including: *'the promotion of Military and Naval Art, Science and Literature'*.<sup>7</sup>

Today, the Institute's greatest asset, as has always been the case, are its members who continue to be both beneficiaries and benefactors, maintaining a Library which contains Australia's earliest military history and is now recognised as of national significance; its defence and security literature, dating from the early 19<sup>th</sup> century to the current day; its maps, charts and plans, and a wide collection of military and naval art capturing the progress of defence capability over the last almost century and a half.

In enabling scholarly learning and robust discussions, the Institute's achievements over the past year have been significant:

- hosting a regular series of monthly lunchtime lectures by high quality speakers, on topics including: *'Implications of the AUKUS agreement'* and *'Understanding the Defence Strategic Review'*;
- publishing a regular series of high-quality journal editions, with the previous NSW journal *United Service* now recognised as the national journal of all Institutes across Australia; and
- maintaining regular and effective contact with its Vice Patrons: the RAN Fleet Commander, the Army Forces Commander and Commander 2<sup>nd</sup> Division, RAAF Air Commander, and the CEO of Thales Australia and New Zealand.

No organisation with such a full agenda can flourish without strong leadership. Today, we recognise that this year marks the end of the current President's three-year term of office, and we thank Professor Michael Hough for his leadership.

Finally, I acknowledge the members, the volunteers, and the 'co-opted' volunteers, the partners and families who are the Institute's 'third arm'. Thank you for ensuring that the Royal United Services Institute continues to thrive as a major organisation for informing and promoting debate on defence and security issues.

Please enjoy this special Anniversary afternoon tea, which is my - our - very tangible way of saying thank you to all members of the Royal United Services Institute.

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<sup>7</sup> <https://www.rusinsw.org.au/site/History.php>