

WHAT DOES AUSTRALIA'S MILITARISM COST US?

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- Australia was born belligerent
- We have repeatedly fought in our allies' wars
- We haven't won a war with the US since 1945

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- Since 2001 war has been continuous
- War against 'terror' cannot be won or lost
- It feeds the military industrial security complex
- It creates more terrorists

3

- Australia is repeatedly told to spend more on the military
- We currently spend just under 2% of GDP. Australia is 12th in the world for military expenditure.
- Hugh White, ASPI and the US Ambassador want this to rise to between 3 and 4% of GDP. Would that be enough to displace our dependence on the US?

4

- In the 2019 budget of \$500.87 billion, \$38.7 billion or 13 per cent is for military expenditure, leaving \$462.17 for everything else. That's over \$100 million a day, more than \$1500 for each Australian, including those on Newstart, who have had \$39 a day for a decade.
- Military spending will rise to \$157.8 billion in 2022/23, leaving \$343.07 for everything else
- It includes \$2.5 billion for an air defence system (only good for fighting enemy aircraft, which wouldn't be used), 75 F35 joint strike fighters (late, under-equipped, 60 odd to come), the 12 French submarines (slow, redundant on delivery in 2040), the Abrams tank (slow, heavy, inoperable), C5 troop carriers and helicopter ships (waste of money in modern warfare), and 3 air warfare destroyers (ditto, vulnerable).

5

- Questions: is this value for money? Does more of it make Australia safer? Does it make the US more likely to defend us or only more demanding that we fight alongside them? What threatens Australia? Are US bases in Australia a nuclear target? Do they involve us in wars against countries that do not threaten Australia?
- Only foreseeable threats are from China (would use supersonic or hypersonic missiles) and Indonesia (with what? Indonesian military force is mainly for domestic purposes)
- These questions are not being asked.
- Defence is exempted from efficiency dividend. Accounting for expenditure is inadequate. More is demanded by ASPI and defence industries.

6

- Australia should consult our Southeast Asian and South Pacific neighbours more closely about these questions.

- Apart from Singapore, they don't don't arm themselves against invasion by China. They stand up for their fishing grounds and territorial seas.
- Australia should discuss with India, South Korea, and Japan alternatives to encircling China.

7

- Compare US: annual increases in military expenditure, now 3-4 percent of GDP (much more during past wars)
- At \$US716 billion, defence now receives almost 60 percent of discretionary spending in annual US budget. Under Trump it has increased by more than \$100 billion. With what result?
- 26 years late auditable financial statement from Pentagon last year showed a non-functional accounting system, cybersecurity weaknesses, failure to track and account for spending, and concealed \$125 billion in bureaucratic waste.
- F35 fighters cost \$90 million each and are being usurped by swarms of cheap drone weapons controlled by networked satellites and AI.
- What direct threats? None, but US spends more than next 8 largest spenders combined: China, Saudi Arabia, India, France, Russia, Britain, Germany, Japan (4 are allies). More military force cannot prevent China's rise.

8

- US rejects compromise and cooperation: LOS Treaty, CTBT, Antipersonnel Landmine Ban, ICC. Rejects treaties protecting genetic resources, conventional arms trade, banning cluster bombs, persons with disabilities. Trump took US out of TPP, Paris Accord on climate, INF treaty, UNHRC, UNESCO, JCPOA, and NAFTA.
- All recent US efforts have failed: regime change, sanctions, nation-building, counter-terrorism, counterinsurgency, red lines, R2P.
- State Department, USAID and Foreign Service have been reduced to ineffectiveness
- The US is a weak, highly militarised ally: this is dangerous.

9

- 'We are...tolerating too much spending that doesn't buy useful capacity, accumulating too much federal debt, and yet not acquiring a forward-looking, 21st century military built around new cyber and space technologies. We have become complacent and strategically flabby about adapting to a profoundly altered world'. Change requires better leadership. (Jessica T. Mathews, 'America's indefensible defence budget', *New York Review of Books*, 18 July 2019: 23-4).
- Australia: ditto.