



## FAQ's for IPAN's Alternative Self-Defence Policy

1. QUES: Would our self defence policy be more expensive than the current defence policy? Wouldn't we have to spend more if we didn't rely on the USA for our defence?

ANS: There is a big difference between gearing up to defend our territory only and gearing up to be part of an aggressive US military machine whose objective is wars against countries distant from its shores. The latter is logistically far more complicated and expensive. The latter also ties us into using complex and costly military hardware applicable to such distant wars of aggression.

Whilst IPAN is not expert in the military equipment needed for territorial self defence or its cost, we can point to another country which adopted neutrality and armed self defence of its territory and see what that defence cost. The country is Switzerland. In 2020 it spent 0.7% of its GDP on defence. At that time, 2020/21 Australia spent three times that amount as a % of its GDP on defence. Experts are saying that modern military technology favours the defender and is less expensive than aggressive forward defence. For example airborne and underwater appear to be effective in defence and at low cost.

2. QUES: Where would the military industry complex sit on such a self defence policy? Would they continue to make money out of the public purse?

ANS: IPAN's Alternative Defence policy is very clear. It supports a sovereign publicly- owned defence industry to the extent that such an industry is needed to make our self defence forces self-reliant and effective in territorial defence. It does not support a privately owned military industrial complex. There would be no place for foreign corporations to make money from the public purse producing defence material or to lobby government to invest in its latest and expensive defence "solution". Where items cannot be manufactured in Australia they would be sourced from countries with similar foreign policies to ours.

3. QUES: What would self defence look like? What hardware would be needed and could we manufacture it ourselves?

ANS: IPAN has resisted specifying the hardware needed for a true self defence of our territory. This is for two reasons. The first is that IPAN has no expertise in this field but would expect the military experts of the time to step in with the answers if and when Australia becomes independent. Secondly, the IPAN's policy does not apply now, whilst we are under US domination and military integration. It applies when Australia is independent and free of the US military alliance. As that is in the future, we don't know, and who does, what military technologies will be available then for territorial self- defence. A few years ago armed drones were not available and from current overseas war experience, they can be very effective and are cheap to manufacture and in quantity. The future may produce unmanned underwater drones that can supplement or replace submarines and also be cheap to produce compared to manned submarines. IPAN maintains, as does the Greens, that Australia can produce the defence equipment needed for territorial self-defence as Australia did in the second war. We produced our own munitions, bombs and small arms including the Australian designed and produced Owen machine gun. At that time the Commonwealth Aircraft Corporation and the Government Aircraft factory produced the military aircraft for the war effort. It stands to reason that a far simpler form of aircraft, drones could be produced again if such an organisation was re-established.

We are a talented nation of 27 million people with substantial natural resources. No one should under-estimate our capacity to manufacture what is needed for defence and for everyday living.

4. QUES: Is self defence by ourselves without a big power protector really feasible?

ANS: Reliance on a big power protector for our defence is highly questionable. We are talking about the United States as the protector and the US, under Trump, has made it abundantly clear that the US operates in defence of its own interests and will turn its back on its allies and even act against their interests when it suits the US. This recognition is forcing Australia to rethink defence without a big power protector. That is reality. There is now no alternative. We have to think about our own defence without a big power protector and IPAN's contribution of territorial self-defence based on non-nuclear armed neutrality is beckoning. In addition, the IPAN policy emphasizes the importance of diplomacy as the first line of defence and the pursuit of peace and mutually beneficial relations with all countries.

5. QUES: What position would a self-defence policy based on non-nuclear armed neutrality take with regard to liberation struggles of oppressed nations such as our near neighbour, West Papua?

ANS: If Australia dissolved its current military alliance with the USA and adopted a self-defence posture, it wouldn't necessarily ignore the liberation struggles of oppressed nations like our near neighbour, West Papua. It could still oppose aggressor nations through diplomacy, breaking off diplomatic relations, hosting refugees from invaded countries, providing material support to genuine liberation movements, and imposing penalties on aggressor nations, among other measures.

The goal of an alternative self-defence posture for Australia is to break free from its dependent alliance with the USA and its participation in aggressive, endless wars. By doing so, Australia could join a far larger international community that embraces neutrality and non-alignment (120 countries).

6. QUES: Why choose an armed national self-defence policy over civil disobedience and non-cooperation to oppose an invader? Wouldn't that achieve better results for peace?

ANS: Only a small number of non-violent resistance movements have successfully opposed an aggressive invader. They remain the minority in cases of national liberation or defence—for example, Gandhi's Non-Cooperation Movement in India. While Gandhi's Congress Party did secure India's independence, the struggle came at an enormous cost.

Historically, opposition to aggression has combined **both** non-violent **and** violent resistance. Typically, violent self-defence movements gain majority support from oppressed nations. A non-cooperation stance assumes that the entire population holds pacifist convictions, or could be persuaded to adopt them. And it is elevating 'peace' at any price, even defeat, when in reality an occupied Australia would never have peace.

7 QUES: Violence begets violence. Shouldn't the peace movement promote a non-violent response to oppose violent aggression?

ANS: While it's true that violence begets violence, diplomacy and dialogue should always be the first line of defence. IPAN advocates this approach in its *Alternative Self-Defence Policy*. However, each nation must decide how to resist aggression and invasion. Non-violent resistance is no guarantee of success. Self-Defence can deter violent aggression.

Every country has the right to defend itself against invasion. **UN Article 51 states:**

*“Nothing in the present Charter shall impair the inherent right of individual or collective self-defence if an armed attack occurs against a Member of the United Nations, until the Security Council has taken measures necessary to maintain international peace and security. Measures taken by Members in the exercise of this right of self-defence shall be immediately reported to the Security Council and shall not in any way affect the authority and responsibility of the Security Council under the present Charter to take at any time such action as it deems necessary in order to maintain or restore international peace and security.”*

8 QUES: Would the current Australian Defence Force (ADF) be willing to transform from a 'Forward Defence' posture to a self-defence one?

ANS: No, the current ADF would not willingly transform into a self-defence military. Historically, it has been tied first to British and now to US military campaigns of domination. Only under a **truly independent Australia**, free from foreign supremacy, could the ADF be reformed into a genuine self-defence force.

9 QUES: Doesn't the current alliance with the US safeguard Australia and the democratic values both countries espouse? Aren't the rule of law, international rules-based order, democracy, free speech, and freedom of assembly worth fighting for?

ANS: This is a common Western mantra, but the West's actions often contradict its proclaimed ideals. The "rule of law" and "rules-based order" are frequently flouted by Western powers themselves. For example:

- The **US invasion of Iraq (2003)** lacked UN approval or widespread support.
- Retired US General **Wesley Clark** revealed that, after the Soviet Union's collapse, the US planned to invade **seven Middle Eastern countries in five years**—demonstrating a long-standing agenda of regime change.<sup>1</sup>
- The US has also supported authoritarian allies (e.g., Saudi Arabia, Gulf States) while its own elections are heavily influenced by corporate donors, making its system more of a **plutocracy** than a true democracy.
- Another example of free speech denied is the Australian whistleblower protection and the Public Interest Disclosure Act. Julian Assange and David McBride suffered imprisonment at the hands of the "Rule of Law" for bringing truth to power.
- The newly adopted definition of antisemitism by many of Australia's universities is a regressive move to curtail freedom of speech and assembly. Criticism or protest of Israeli genocide against Palestinians on campus now risks censure and expulsion.
- The West claims, ad nauseam, superiority on human rights and liberty. However, Winston Churchill, that great defender of liberalism and liberty, deliberately ordered the diversion of food from starving Indian civilians resulting in *the Bengal famine that is estimated to have killed over three million Indians*.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> <https://genius.com/General-wesley-clark-seven-countries-in-five-years-annotated>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6Knt3rKTqCk>

<sup>2</sup> Shashi Tharoor, the author of "Inglorious Empire: What the British Did to India"

The best defence of democratic values and the rule of law is scrupulous efforts to uphold them in practice.