



Independent and Peaceful Australia Network (IPAN)

MEDIA RELEASE

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Increase Newstart Allowance, Not military spending for US wars

- **Over 700,000 Australians struggling on \$40 dollars a day to meet basic needs**
- **\$200B of Australian Defence Budget over 10 years, largely supporting U.S. wars**

“In the past 5 years government spending on social and community services has been severely cut back while the Australian governments’ military spending on supporting US offensive wars and the military-industrial complex has increased exponentially.

Over 700,000 Australians depend on Newstart Unemployment Benefits for their existence, struggling to survive on \$277.85 a week or \$40 a day, living below the poverty line. Many are homeless, going without food and unable to pay for basic necessities like gas, electricity, education and health”.

The Independent and Peaceful Australia Network (IPAN) is therefore calling on the Morrison government and all parliamentary parties to increase the Newstart Allowance substantially.

“It is a disgrace that in a wealthy country like Australia, government benefits for unemployed people is lowest of all OECD economies, billions of dollars in taxes that people pay for a society to provide social and community services, health, education and public housing are now being syphoned off to prepare for US wars of aggression and subsidise the military-industrial complex”, said spokesperson for Independent and Peaceful Australia Network (IPAN), Shirley Winton.

Recently, the government awarded \$73 billion in tax free contracts to multinational weapons manufacturers.

“Australia’s 10 year defence budget of \$200 billion will largely support U.S. global wars and its military strategies that have little to do with sovereign self-defence of Australia. On the contrary, the Australian government’s support for US wars and interoperability with the US military only threatens our peace, security and sovereignty”.

“The US-Australia military alliance is an economic and military burden on people of Australia”, said Ms Winton.

The Costs of War will be one of the main topics IPAN National Conference will be addressing on 2-4 August in Darwin. Key speakers on the Costs of War are Dr. Margie Beavis, President Medical Association for Prevention of War; Dr Alison Bronowski, ANU Academic; and Warren Smith, Assistant National Secretary of Maritime Union of Australia.

See www.ipan.org.au

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