

....PUBLIC SUBMISSION....

....FOREIGN POLICY WHITE PAPER...

....By Lloyd Brand...

As we are a part of the Asia Pacific Region, I think it would be beneficial for Australia to strengthen ties economically, diplomatically and militarily with Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore, Japan, South Korea and Vietnam. As China is one of our major trading partners in the area, it is imperative that we maintain strong diplomatic ties and trade options, we need to keep those doors of opportunity open. The changing political demographics in America and Europe will perhaps be the impetus for our government to rely less heavily on the US and focus more on our needs, and our relationship with our Asian neighbours.

As a growing middle power Australia needs to nurture its political and trade alliances as well as its international responsibilities (treaties and relations), not just in foreign affairs, but also in domestic policy. It is important that Australia is not seen as the "Deputy" of the US in the East Asian region, but as an independent arbitrator, one that can mediate agreements that will be beneficial to all parties. Australia has to strike a balance here, we need to keep both the US and China onside, and at the same time expand and strengthen our relationships with the other Asian countries like Japan, Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore, South Korea and Vietnam. There are many reciprocal opportunities that are open to Australia in the Asian region, such as education, industry, agriculture to name a few. (Education already plays a significant role in our relationships with the above named countries).

Australia also needs to distance itself from our reliance on all things American, especially our military alliance, while maintaining strong trade relationships, while at the same time focusing our energies on strengthening our current military alliances with Indonesia and Singapore, and improve our relations (militarily) with Japan South Korea and Vietnam. If Australia can form stronger ties in a military sense with Japan, South Korea and Vietnam, we just may be in a much better position to negotiate diplomatically with China over the on-going South China Sea dispute. It would make sense as we are in geo-political terms, an integral component of the Asia Pacific Region, especially now that there has been a change of government in the US, and the last thing Australia needs right now, is to be drawn into a potential disastrous conflict with China.

As it stands at the moment the "East" see Australia as being too far in line with the policies of the US, and as such there is a loss or rather a lack of trust in us. Australia needs to build up that trust and become a partner that the Asia Pacific nations can look up to and depend upon in times of need. For this to happen, we must do what we ourselves ask those who immigrate to Australia to do, Integrate into our society. So to be successful, we must not stand apart, but become a fully integrated member of the Asia Pacific Region.

Thank you for the opportunity of allowing me to state my views.

Yours Sincerely

Lloyd Brand.