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**From:** David Macilwain [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, 28 February 2017 10:19 PM  
**To:** White Paper  
**Subject:** Australia's involvement in the War On Syria

To the White Paper Committee:

Australia lives uncomfortably in East Asia. Despite the ever-increasing links to and dependence on our Asian neighbours, particularly China, Japan and South Korea, we maintain our umbilical link to the old Empire, through intelligence and military interdependence and in our European-American culture.

The current tensions over the South China Sea, which have changed little as a result of the new US administration, symbolise the pro-US mindset and behaviour towards China which must change if global 'security' and peaceful relations are to continue.

Contrary to most of the commentary from media and think-tanks and politicians, China's actions in maintaining control and influence over the South China Sea do NOT pose any threat either to Australia, Australian interests or to the global community as a whole, but DO pose a threat to America's continued and illegitimate authority and military dominance of every corner of the globe.

We only need consider the likely reaction from the US were Chinese battle groups, including strategic bombers, to navigate between Cuba and the US mainland, while stating that this was to 'maintain freedom of navigation'.

Equally we should remember the enormous fuss made during the G20 meeting in Brisbane over the proximity of Russian navy ships in international waters to our north.

It is time that we accept our role within our region, and establish stronger ties with it in all fields including military and intelligence, in order to counter the clear danger that the US currently presents to the international order, both in our region and across the Middle East.

While some members of our parliament and most members of the media may not be aware of the true geostrategic situation in Iraq and Syria, and Australia's intimate involvement with the aggressor parties, we must assume that those in DFAT are.

Last September Australian Air-force assets were involved in the most brazen and criminal attack on a Syrian Army base in the east of the country, as part of a raid by the US coalition allegedly targeting Da'esh. Whatever may have been said about that attack, including in the report of the internal US enquiry that whitewashed over any criminal intention by US commanders, the conclusions of Syrian, Russian and Iranian intelligence, leaders and commentators was unambiguous – the clear intent of the strike, which killed nearly 100 Syrian soldiers and destroyed several tanks and other military assets, was to facilitate the movement of Da'esh forces in control of part of the city of Deir al Zour.

As reported by some of the soldiers not killed in the attack, executed by fighter jets and A10 attack helicopters, Da'esh fighters moved up and took over the strategic post immediately after the attack, from which they were then able to target the vital air supply connection to Damascus, which was the city's lifeline.

Following on from this war-crime, in which Australia was most intimately involved – but in which it was not necessarily intentionally complicit – Da'esh took control of even more of Deir al Zour after thousands of

fighters were 'allowed' to cross the desert from Mosul or from Raqqa, while Syrian and Russian forces were engaged in the liberation of Aleppo.

The complete failure to acknowledge or justify our submission to US and NATO policy, of aggression against Syria in pursuit of 'The Redirection' – as Seymour Hersh described it – means that the Australian public is not only in ignorance of the policies being pursued by their government, but is also threatened by them.

As should be also quite obvious, Russia is the ultimate target of US military actions. Because this illegitimate and covert aggression against Russia continues to escalate, and is stoked by a baseless anti-Russian and anti-Putin campaign from governments and media, the end result is almost inevitable major military conflict.

Thanks to the depth of our 'commitment' to the US military agenda – Pine Gap, and the forward base for attacks on China, any such escalation will see us on the side of the aggressors, and as a legitimate target for strategic strikes from threatened major powers.

It is not possible to consider how Australia's Foreign Policy may be modified and developed unless the true nature of the Australian government's intentions and allegiances is understood, including particularly the allegiances to the US, UK and Israel. But there is another aspect to this discussion, and that is the emphasis on finding a way forward that suits only Australia's specific economic and strategic interests.

Is it not possible that a foreign policy might take into account the interests of other countries who may be affected or damaged by our pursuit of actions which maximise Australian interests, regardless of others? One need only think of the current plans to open the 'world's largest coal-mine' – adding hugely to the already excessive amounts of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere that threaten the whole world. Australia's involvement in international bodies – the UN and UNHRC has become anachronistic and hypocritical in many areas, including climate related and human rights issues.

If Australia is to earn the respect of the International community – that is not dominated by US interests – then it must develop a foreign policy more in line with countries in our region pursuing cooperative development and eschewing military confrontation.

This means cutting back on or abandoning cooperative relations with some of our key allies, particularly the US and Israel, but also the theocratic Gulf states – Saudi Arabia, Qatar and the UAE, and Turkey, whose support for the terrorist armies in Syria has been the cause of so much death and disaster.

I think it is important to bring these issues to your attention, even though I see no possibility of significant change either in government foreign policy or in media misinformation about it.

Thankyou for the opportunity to make this submission.

David Macilwain,

Spokesperson for AMRIS – Australians for Reconciliation in Syria.