

Mark Taylor

I would like to see Australia adopt a stance of armed neutrality with good relationships with all our neighbours and trading partners.

I would like our focus to shift from projection of force as part of the US Alliance to defence of our own territory, strong regional relationships and a better relationship with China.

I do not see this as inconsistent with standing up for human rights in our region, including in West Papua, Tibet and Eastern Turkestan.

I deeply regret the undemocratic, unaccountable and disastrous involvement in US foreign military adventures of the last 30-40 years, with the consequent loss of Australian lives, veteran suicides and damage to our international reputation as an independent and even handed nation.

I also regret the enormous waste of resources on expensive and inappropriate hardware which comes with being a junior partner in the US alliance.

I feel that the Australian people and our political representatives have been given no say in our decisions to go to war or whether or not to oppose human rights abuses in our region.

I also abhor the environmental damage from militarism, including it must be said Chinese militarism in the South China Sea. Both great powers in our region are guilty of that.

The main priority for our security must be strong and effective climate action, which will help prevent the torrent of environmental refugees who will by necessity seek refuge on our shores in the coming decades.

it's not too late for Australia to shift direction, open ourselves up to a more democratic and accountable policy, end the desperate and ever-increasing secrecy and restrictions on whistleblowers and dissenters.

At last we could give due respect and honour to our principles of democracy and human rights and make Australia once again a source of pride for its citizens.

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