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The Hon Scott Morrison MP  
Prime Minister of Australia  
Parliament House  
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear Prime Minister,

## **AUSTRALIA'S FOREIGN AND DEFENCE POLICY AND THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA**

As a citizen of Australia, and of the world community of nations, I am writing to you to express to you my increasing concern over the directions our long-term friend and ally, the United States of America (USA) is taking , and the seeming unquestioning acceptance and obedience to the requests of the USA by the Australian Government in our foreign and defence policies and directions.

Granted, the USA, with a great deal of sacrifice, saved Australia from the likelihood of invasion and conquest by the Japanese during the Second World War, for which we owe the USA a great debt of thanks.

**For the sake of ourselves, and of all humanity, the way forward for the community of nations must be one that builds stability, peace and international co-operation and respect. The alternative may well lead to a repetition of the catastrophes that were unleashed upon the peoples of the world in 1914 and 1939: with the destructive power of weapons, especially nuclear weapons, now available, such a risk needs to be avoided and safeguarded against with every possible effort.**

Since the election of the current President of the USA (**no longer current, thank goodness!!!**), I have watched with mounting concern the destabilising policies and actions that his Administration has implemented, being, to name a few:

- The Trade War with China;
- The withdrawal of the USA from the international treaty with Iran to avert Iran becoming a nuclear weapons power; and the resulting heightened

tensions and risk of war in the Middle East....**hopefully this can be restored under President Biden**;

- **The withdrawal of the USA from the nuclear weapons restrictions treaty with Russia signed by Presidents Gorbachev and Reagan; and the resulting renewal of an international nuclear arms race between, especially, the USA, Russia and China; ....hopefully this can be restored under President Biden too**;
- And, last week, the announcement by the USA that it will now resume use of land mines by its Armed Forces, weapons that are known by painful experience to be difficult to locate once a conflict is over and causes death and serious injury to mostly non-combatants, children and livestock.
- **The weaponisation of Artificial Intelligence and the “arms race” in this field between the USA and China as reported on ABC TV Four Corners on 9 August 2021 in the documentary *Are You Scared Yet, Human?***

All of these policy decisions by the USA contribute to heightened international tensions and arms competition and lead us, as a world community, further away from an international culture of peaceful co-existence and cooperation. In my view, these directions give a message that the USA is preparing itself for war by re-arming; and, the likely “enemy” perceived by the USA is China.

**These developments are very alarming for the future of the human race, and indeed, of life on this planet in general. A general war, sometime in the future, with the likelihood of the use of nuclear warheads would decimate all life on this our planet home.** Being a former British Army Infantry Officer (3<sup>rd</sup> Battalion The Queen’s Regiment) trained in nuclear warfare I am keenly aware of the danger we face.

I am therefore writing to you to **appeal to you to use the long-standing friendship that Australia has with the USA to influence our friends to temper their actions and policies that fuel re-armament and heighten international tensions; and to influence and encourage the USA to once again become a nation that chooses to defuse international tensions, encourage disarmament, and maximise international cooperation.** The opposite side of the coin, I gravely fear, will lead once again to armed conflict and massive suffering and destruction.

**In direct contradiction to the USA’s recent decision to withdraw from the nuclear weapons restrictions treaty with Russia, the international effort needs to be renewed, sustained and built to reach a point where we obtain agreement from nuclear powers to give up and *disarm all their nuclear weapons.* While this is not achieved, humankind and every other life form on this planet is at extreme risk of the catastrophic**

consequences of a nuclear weapons incident or exchange, be it by terrorism, error, miscalculation, or the outbreak of war between one or more nuclear powers. Humankind has shown itself far too fickle and unreliable in its history to date to think that none of these could happen: if nuclear weapons are not abolished, sooner or later, one or other WILL happen. *Nuclear disarmament is an urgent priority to safeguard our future and life on the planet in general.* I therefore request that Australia uses every opportunity to lobby for and support efforts on the international stage to achieve nuclear weapons disarmament.

Finally, I would urge that, over the coming years, Australia evolves a foreign and defence policy similar to that of the Scandinavian countries: less betoken, aligned and “obedient” to the USA, and more independently pursuing foreign and defence policies that support regional and international cooperation, prosperity and calm.

Yours most sincerely,

**JOHN COLLINGRIDGE**

Attachment: Distribution List