

## FOREIGN POLICY-MILITARISM & THE LESSONS OF HISTORY

Personal submission to the IPAN Enquiry - Penny Lockwood 2021

According to the Foreign Policy White Paper (2018), two of Australia's priorities are "Sovereignty" and "Rule of Law". However, Australia is clearly not achieving either of these. Instead, we are cloned to US and UK foreign policies and without hesitation acquiescing to participating in US wars, invasions of sovereign nations and regime change. The Australian government is consequently ignoring both its stated Foreign Policy objectives. These wars are often opposed by most Australians who have no voice in deciding whether or not to go to war and maintain our continuing so-called national security "dependence" on the US.

The wars that Australia is illegally participating in, as deputy sheriff to the US, include Saudi Arabia's genocidal war in Yemen (including our own contribution of weapon systems), invasions and wars in Iraq, Afghanistan, Libya, and earlier regime change in Chile to displace democratically elected Allende and install US dictator Pinochet. There are many more instances of Australia's participation in US invasions of sovereign countries and successful and attempted regime change.

We have a long history of supporting US interference in sovereign countries' governments and elections. Instead of using diplomacy, we always support illegal acts by the US to help them achieve access to natural resources, or secure territory for yet more military bases, such as Crimea in the Black Sea.

Essential to maintaining our participation in US and UK wars is the use of propaganda and fake news about supposed "enemies" that we are told threaten us. This is currently no more apparent than how we keep the Australian population in fear of Russia and China. In large part it is possible for our government to achieve this by never mentioning a country's history because it might alter people's perceptions. To aid our ignorance and relevance of history to mask how we view other countries the Government has even recently defunded university history courses. They have learnt well from the architect of modern totalitarian propaganda, Goebbels, who famously through his understanding of the instruments of "public enlightenment" and fake propaganda helped build and maintain the Nazi dictatorship and support for WW2. Without an understanding and reference to history it is so much easier to create fear amongst the Australian population about the "threat" posed by particular nations. It is also easier to gain support for sanctions against sovereign nations because crippling them will make it easier to invade or engage in regime change. The US, and therefore Australia, support for sanctions is selective – the monstrous regime of Saudi Arabia avoids sanctions, but Cuba is crippled.

In the case of Russia as an example, our propagandists, including main-stream media, have forgotten their history, and helped create an atmosphere of fear and loathing with false claims. This is part of the Australian Government's attempt to keep us accepting our dependence (not independence) on the US and the UK who use the same Foreign Policy propaganda tools. I am well versed in Russian affairs having spent many university years studying the country's history and politics. In particular, the false claims about Crimea, a potential war zone, astound me. Yet most Australians seem to believe it all, making it much easier for the West to attempt to forcibly take Crimea (once again). Australians are not well

educated in the history of the Soviet Union and Russia, which will make it much easier to justify waging war against this sovereign country. We have already seen recent attempts by the UK and US to provoke the Russians over Crimea. Crimea only became Ukrainian in an illegal transfer of the territory from Russia in 1954 by Khrushchev as a birthday present to his Ukrainian wife – this was done without approval from the Soviet Duma. Crimea has been part of Russia since Catherine the Great's defeat in 1783 of the Ottoman Empire and is the site of the famous Battleship Potemkin film and home to Chekhov and other Russian writers over the years. It has since the late 1700s had one of Russia's, later the Soviet Union's and now Russia's largest naval bases. Strategically and geopolitically, the US and UK would love to get their hands on it which would give them a military base located in an area they wish to have geopolitically. The population in Crimea is over 80% ethnic Russian. In a 2014 referendum 85% of Crimeans voted and 96.77% of those voting wanted to be part of Russia. Independent polls, such as the German GfK and a British polling organisation with ANU connections showed that 82% of those polled supported the referendum outcome and only 4% were against. It was OK for Scotland to have to have a referendum on sovereignty but not Russia. Instead, we call it an "annexation". The more we ignore history and ethnicity and the decisions and wishes of the majority of people, the easier it is for the US, UK and Australia to create fear and false justification for war. That is the basis of our Foreign Policy – keep history from the people.