

Breaking the US Hold



The US has a hold over Australian governments of all complexions. It's had it for decades.

There is an urgent need to drag Australia out of the US clutches. How do we do it?

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Different approaches are pursued in the anti-war movement, reflecting different thinking the approaches are built on. What prospects of success do the different approaches have?

People are struggling to get by while governments spend billions on arms and war preparations. AUKUS alone is costing Australians \$30 million a day for 30 years. War preparations drain government coffers. The hole is plugged by under-funding hospitals, schools, public transport, Unis, NDIS and other social services. National debt shoots up.

Inflation is taking off. Wages will still be below their 2021 buying power after the recent minimum wage decision. The government has removed power bill rebates while announcing multi-billion dollar spends on warships, missiles, drones and other weapons systems and bases, going flat out, literally, buying into US war preparations.

AUKUS pillars 1 & 2, the Force Posture Agreement, stationing of thousands of US marines and US strategic B52 nuke capable bombers, building of an air warfare command centre and airfields in northern Australia along with a US Nuke-powered submarine base in WA. US and NATO allies' military industries have expanded in Australia massively since 2018. Local military industry has also expanded in line with American strategy for a level of local supply of missiles, drones and other war materiel. The numbers, frequency and size of joint Australia-USA exercises have increased.

The community is left to our own devices while Australian military forces become more tied into the American military and military industries prosper. Australia is locked into US belligerence; in ANZUS, the QUAD, AUKUS, the Force Posture Agreement and wider military integration.

US China rivalry hunts markets, raw materials and territory

Global US-China rivalry is intensifying, raising the threat of war between two nuclear armed superpowers. It's focussed on the Indo-Pacific region. The US targets China's oil dependence in the Middle East and Chinese industry's need for growing amounts of raw materials for continued development. The US and Australian

authorities look to use the US hold over Australian resources of lithium, rare earths, and prospectively iron ore and coal, to handicap Chinese economic development and its build-up of military forces.

Government and much of business have an antagonistic attitude to China. They dub China an economic and strategic rival to the US and local business tycoons depending on US finance and technology. China acts as that rival to the US. China uses finance, market access, with-holding raw materials, sanctions and bribery to get its way in opposition to local sovereign interests as well as US-led bullying, sanctions and military action.



Pine Gap Spy Base. Picture Red Flag

China's government, banks, funds and monopolies act as capitalist monopolisers whatever signboard they use to describe themselves. A look at the billionaires behind Chinese private monopolies like Alibaba, Huawei, JDCom, ByteDance, Nongfu Spring, Wantai Biotech, Tencent (WeChat), BYD, shows the enrichment of Chinese monopoly capitalists rely on close relations with the leaders of government, integration of the two in the ruling party and government administration, a form of state capitalism.

While the US is making the running here at this stage, that can change. In WA with its economic reliance on trade with China, large business interests are linked into China's development and expansionist ambitions. Australians interests lay in opposing the US entangling Australia in its strategy to secure its empire. We should be keeping alert to China's manoeuvres as a rival to the US and keep our eyes on China's own war preparations.

Australia's government operates as a US deputy in the South Pacific, rounding countries up in a web of Australian and US military and financial agreements and debt to frustrate China's position.

US and Australian governments have positioned Australia as a lynchpin of US defence of its empire against China on the southern flank, whatever Australians want, despite making Australia a target.

Defence of US primacy is no passive holding position. The US throws its weight around, engaged in proxy wars in the Middle East and Ukraine, launching its own attacks trying to decisively and brutally force countries and peoples to bend to US predominance.

The aggressive strategy includes the growing networks of US bases, military alliances and agreements, sanctions and tariffs. Massive expansion of US military facilities in Australia and repeated rhetoric about Chinese aggressive intent raises tensions behind US-Australian attacks on Chinese interests and the possibility of attack on China itself. It also puts Australia on Chinese strategic target lists. It's a huge threat to people in Australia and across the globe.

What do we do about it?

Your answer depends on what you see as the cause of Australian governments going along with the US state, militarily and diplomatically.

Corruption

If the problem is corruption, being paid off - that is one thing. The solution means paying more or replacing the corrupt and penalising them.

It's not unusual for top figures in Australia, on leaving parliament or government administration, to take jobs in arms companies, banks and the like, being paid fortunes often for not doing much. Some help steer a company or lobby group to

Crikey. tax and contract advantages with collaborators still in the system.

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DEFENCE ANALYSIS POLITICS

Defence-Thales scandal heads for corruption watchdog. But a bigger inquiry is needed

Defence's handling of a \$1.3 billion Thales contract has been referred to the NACC. But officials need to explain their incompetence and unethical conduct.

A number of contracts have been let which have been

found to involve corrupt officials or ‘undue’ influence. In Australia, corruption can conflict with the collective interests of capitalists as a whole. They hit roadblocks. Some institutions have charters to expose and punish corruption. None cuts it out. At best they limit the scope and scale of the corruption.

Corruption is a feature in Australia. Eliminating corruption completely would be a good thing but corruption doesn’t play a decisive role in the overall hold the US has over Australian government and military

It would make the government and military more effective going with the US.

The Merchants of Death

What if the problem is the power of the US weapons corporations dominating and entangling Australia in their aggression. The answer would be to push them aside, breaking the US hold on Australia.

A look at the status of arms companies in the USA shows they are not close to being the major force that could alone determine government policy. The table below shows the market valuations of the biggest US companies.

Rank	Industry	Company	Market Capitalisation
1	Computer Chips	Nvidia	\$6,796 B
2	High Tech	Apple	\$6,528 B
3	High Tech	Google	\$6,259 B
4	High Tech	Microsoft	\$4,177 B
5	High Tech	Amazon	\$3,759 B
6	Manufacture	SpaceX	\$3,073 B
7	Communications	Broadcom	\$2,469 B
8	High Tech	Facebook	\$2,131 B
9	Manufacture	Tesla	\$2,128 B
10	Computer Chips	Micron Tech	\$1,586 B
65	Aircraft/weapons	Boeing	A\$257.15 B

96	Weapons	Lockheed Martin	A\$181.28 B
https://companiesmarketcap.com/aud/usa/largest-companies-in-the-usa-by-market-cap/ B – Billion \$ nAustralia Dollars			

High tech chip-manufacturer, Nvidia, is 26 times the value of Boeing, the largest US arms company.

While the arms industry is significant, they have nowhere near the economic clout of other bigger capitalist combinations; nowhere near enough to dominate the economic interests of the nation or society as a whole, to dictate government policies to benefit their profit-making.

The low ranking of arms industry companies points to the arms industry being important but far from alone having decisive economic clout that could determine government policy alone.

The Fortune 500 list of the top 500 US public and private companies, ranked by annual revenue, shows arms manufacturers were huge but relatively smallish fish in an enormous pond.

You get down to number 47 before finding an arms company. That company, Boeing, had a turnover of 12% of Amazon, the largest company in the US by turnover and around 22% of Alphabet, number 5 on that list as of June 2026,

In addition to those companies listed on a stock exchange, with shares (equity) sold among capitalists and the public, there are other huge private equity and venture capitalist companies, fund managers monopolising through buyouts and takeovers. Some have massive investments in the arms industry and fossil fuels among other sectors. Three of the biggest in 2025 (in \$US) were:

Company	Assets under management	Total assets
Vanguard	\$12 trillion	?
Blackstone	\$1.2 trillion	\$43,470 million
KKR	\$758 billion	\$410.1 billion

Clearly arms industry capitalists are linked into other larger economic sectors like IT, Aerospace, electronics, and communications. US capitalists overall know the role war plays in creating, imposing and sustaining US economic and political

primacy across the globe. They inflict their war machine on people often enough to confirm its vital to them.

The point, though, is US primacy is wielded to extend and expand the enrichment of the biggest US capitalists. It's part of the much bigger system of US capitalists' enrichment and domination.

Campaigning to get rid of the arms manufacturers has its place. Making that the centre of a strategy doesn't deal with the much wider foundations on which the US hold over Australian governments and military is built.

Mistakes and Misjudgements

If the problem is mistakes or misjudgements in setting Australian government policy, the answer would be to correct them.

It would mean exposing mistakes and misjudgements, going through the facts, putting policy in the best interest of Australians to people in charge.

The advocacy involves bringing wide circles of people and organisations on board. Build a strong network of academics and people with influence in high places. Draw in community groups to provide numbers. Send delegations to brief politicians. Work offices around parliament house.

To give the advocacy more weight, get huge numbers signing petitions and participating in meetings and demonstrations, demanding/appealing for the people at the top to make changes to policy.

The point of the strategy is for the push to gain traction with some political activists and politicians and be taken into the halls of government, eventually getting to cabinet and decision makers. That's been a lot of IPAN activity to date.

It relies on the people at the top having got something wrong, to be making mistakes which we could help them fix.

How much chasing politicians does it take to be convinced they aren't open to changing direction?

We've got years of experience. Where's it got us?

The US hold over Australian governments hasn't basically changed.

Are the people at the top the real problem - and the real solution?

What if the problem goes deeper than mistakes and misjudgements? What if the wide US predominance over the economic, diplomatic and political life of Australia leads the government to serve US interests?

That necessitates different strategies to solve the problem, for local peoples interests to prevail over US state and corporate interests - economic, strategic and political. Without confronting and overcoming US predominance, policy can't be changed.

The foundation of the strength of US influence in Australia is their corporate and financial strength locally and internationally. Their military predominance rests on the quantity, quality and reach of their forces, which in turn depend on US industrial and financial capacities.

A Deeper Dive into the US hold over Australian Governments

Australia has a capitalist economy. No one seriously disputes that.

Australian economic life lies with big capitalists owning means to produce and distribute goods and services. The people they employ use those means to produce and distribute the goods and services. All of us consume the products and services with a range of them exported. At the centre of the economy are capitalists and workers. Many others in small business, self-employed professionals, academics and others fill out the economy's framework built on the activity and relations between capitalists and workers.

Australian capitalism has developed from early free market capitalism of many companies competing for market share in each sector. Some were more successful, grew in size, and took over or merged with competitors or by dominating the market, driving competitors out of business. The arenas of competition shrank until the free market has largely been superseded by big corporate monopolies dominating the economy.

By way of example, ages ago hundreds of towns in Australia had a soft-drink maker. Not now. Almost all have been taken over and/or closed. The soft drink market has three monopoly companies, Asahi Holdings, Nestlé, and Coca Cola with

dozens of labels, dominating a \$6.9Bn market. As is typical, the big 3 are all foreign-owned corporations; Japanese, Swiss and American.

Australia's economy is full of sectors where a few monopolies, overshadow competition. Supermarkets, communications, internet markets, beer and wine, banking, insurance, finance, oil and gas, mining, hardware, ... pick your sector. In the vast bulk of cases those big monopoly corporations are overseas owned, with US capitalists' way ahead of other sources. Banks and local companies rely on foreign lenders for finance. Little real competition translates into monopoly superprofits; look at Coles and Woolies multi-\$billion profits each year.

Foreign ownership of most big monopoly corporations, with a portion of local capitalists enriching themselves on their coat-tails, means both groups of capitalists grow rich from the labour of Australian working people and dominate the country's economic life.

US Monopoly Capitalists Impact on Australia Government Action

When the big monopolists talk to government, they speak firmly and carry a big economic political, and military stick. PMs have corporate executives from big local and foreign-owned monopolies on direct dial. PMs take their calls.

Our political institutions have facilitated and supported the pathway to the present economic and political outcome of foreign imperialist domination. It has been their operational effect, and purpose. Australian Governments have trailed along behind US government policy in virtually every international issue since World War 2.

After WW11, US finance, business and government consolidated its position in Australia. Massive investments were made in steel, the car industry, mining, construction supplies, oil refineries, home appliance manufacture and in many other sectors. The ANZUS treaty tried to lock Australia into US strategy. Australia's military hardware was frequently being sourced from the US. In the 1960s strategic US military bases were established at Exmouth in WA and Pine Gap in the Northern Territory.

Step by step, through the second half of the 20th Century, Australia became thoroughly embroiled in US military strategy and systems. The country's people and natural riches were more deeply exploited by monopolies, led by American capitalists.

Tremendous levels of mass community resistance were aroused over the Vietnam war, Australian cultural assertion, industrial struggles and other community battles. They were turned into parliament, ending in 1975 with the Whitlam reform government thrown out in a coup, orchestrated by the CIA.

In the 21st Century domination and exploitation of Australia have reached new levels. A crucial example is the mining, oil and gas extractive industries; 85% foreign-owned. Those owners secured operating profits of \$253bn in 2023-24. *[Undermining our democracy: Foreign corporate influence through the Australian mining lobby; Australia Institute]* In foreign investment, US investment predominates with British and Japanese only fractions of the American level.

Is it possible or plausible the government will make real concessions in foreign and defence policy without touching the general submission to the US? Calls for governments to close US spy bases, to remove US troops, to shut down deployments of US warships, submarines and aircraft, to get out of AUKUS and the Force Posture Agreement, make no sense without stopping governments being grovellers to the US.

The call to break the US hold over Australia is vital for the anti-war movement to make sense to the great mass of Australians. Without that demand, the rest is whistling in the breeze, trying to hide the political realities, which everyone, understands anyway.

People who recognise US domination will stand aside from proposals demanding concessions without touching US domination. Its simply fairytales.

Turning US influence and support around, will require US capitalists, their machinery of state and local social forces they can muster, being pushed aside by greater social forces whose interests stand in opposition to the US interests.

We see it mobilised in community campaigns against war preparations and the US-Israeli wars on Palestine, Iran and Lebanon. Students, nurses, teachers, maritime workers, among diverse thousands of working people, academics, professionals, and people with small businesses; masses of ordinary people in huge numbers have stood up against US proxy wars. Volunteers have travelled to Palestine to assist with treating and supplying victims of US-Zionist attacks.

That mobilisation identifies some of the people who have already and will stand up against the war machine here, against US preparations for war with China and against submission to the US government and state.

The opponents also identify themselves; parliamentary leaders and parties, big business, particularly foreign monopolies, and local big business who rely on foreign finance and contracts for their enrichment. They are complicit in US strategy, inviting deployment and basing of American military forces in Australia.

Overcoming US interests in war in their rivalry with China, will not happen in any short campaign, It cannot rely on a general approach to mobilising people.



There is a need to take the campaign into our communities, to workplaces, to schools and universities, to hospitals and power stations, to rail depots and construction sites; organising on the ground in formations

which engage, empower and mobilise the power of these people.

The movement has developed broad organisation of activists and experts. Allies exist at community levels in local anti-war groups, within workplaces and educational institutions, some unions and other prospective affiliates.

Stepping up affiliate activity requires prioritising creation and organising resources of the movement to support education and organising people in their workplaces, unis, schools, trade unions and communities.

It relies on using local methods, whether that be holding barbeques, finding ways to include anti-war organisation and activity in student, academic and union organising activity where they organise, finding people among sections we need to organise, who can take the initiative in building the movement, supporting and mentoring them.

What is Imperialism?

Imperialism is a stage of capitalism in which;

- concentration of production and capital has culminated in the formation of monopolies;
- those monopolies play a decisive role in economic life;
- bank capital is merged with industrial capital, creating ‘finance capital’;
- the export of capital has acquired pronounced importance;
- large sections of the big capitalists live on the proceeds of capital exports, with capitalists having little or no connection to actual processes of production, exchange, and exploitation;
- finance capital pursues its interests through a financial establishment dominating the machinery of states;
- all territories worldwide are divided among the biggest capitalist powers;
- powerful nations tend to strive for domination instead of striving for liberty
- a handful of the richest or most powerful nations exploit large numbers of small or weak nations;
- the biggest capitalist powers exercise monopolistic possession of the territory of the world;
- Capitalist economies develop at uneven rates. more rapidly expanding capital is dependent on expanding possession of territory, sources of raw material and markets, inevitably having to confront rival capitalists now holding them, using peaceful and armed means.
- Imperialism inevitably means war.



Communist Party of Australia (Marxist-Leninist)

www.cpaml.org

ozml@protonmail.com

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