



Australian Citizens Party

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MEDIA RELEASE

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Australia flexes its 'democratic values' against Iran in next Anglo-American war crime

Scott Morrison's obsequious falling in behind the United States and United Kingdom in targeting Iran again confirms the late former Prime Minister Malcolm Fraser's assertion that Australia does not have an independent foreign policy.

At least elements of the media, unlike the Labor Party, are sceptical about this decision, as they should be, given that it is so clearly a crisis orchestrated by the Trump administration and British government, and yet another deadly Middle East regime-change fiasco in the making.

So why is Labor supporting it? Once again, ALP stands for Another Liberal Party—like with banking abuses, police-state laws now used to raid journalists, and mistreatment of refugees, Labor is desperate to be bipartisan on foreign policy, not just because it is scared of its own shadow, but because it is also subservient to the Anglo-American war machine. The only differences between Labor and the Liberals are in degree and tone, not in substance.

More lies

The government claims it is deploying the ADF to the Strait of Hormuz to "de-escalate" the situation, and to protect "freedom of navigation" from Iran, which has been seizing ships. As usual, their claims are premised on lies.

The current flash point in the Strait of Hormuz has its origins in US President Donald Trump's decision in 2018 to unilaterally withdraw from the nuclear agreement with Iran.

It escalated on 5 May when Trump's National Security Advisor John Bolton—one of the notorious neoconservative liars who orchestrated the 2003 invasion of Iraq—suddenly announced the deployment of the USS *Abraham Lincoln* carrier strike group and a bomber taskforce to the Gulf in response to an unspecified "number of troubling and escalatory indications and warnings".

Very significantly, on 14 May the top UK Commander in the region, Maj. Gen. Chris Ghika, publicly contradicted Bolton in a Pentagon briefing to state that there was no increased threat level from Iran. Just two days later, the UK government overruled Ghika and agreed there was an increased Iranian threat.

From that moment, the British escalated the situation, in coordination with the Washington neocons. On 19 May the UK announced the deployment of its waterborne SAS equivalent, the Special Boat Service, to "protect shipping". Only then did shipping incidents start to occur—indicating that either John Bolton and his British cronies are the prophets of our time, with greater insights than even local British commanders, or that they have orchestrated the incidents to provoke an escalation that can be the pretext for an invasion to achieve Bolton's longstanding goal of regime change in Iran.

The following shipping incidents have occurred after the deployment of US and British forces to the Persian Gulf:

- In mid-June two oil tankers were attacked in the Gulf of Oman, which US Secretary of State and former CIA Director Mike Pompeo instantly blamed on Iran, based on "intelligence, the weapons used, the level of expertise", etc., which he claimed no other force present in the area had. Not true; the British SBS does.
- On 4 July, away from the Persian Gulf, British Marines seized an Iranian oil tanker in the Strait of Gibraltar in the Mediterranean Sea, on its way to deliver oil to Syria. The British claimed to be enforcing EU sanctions against Syria, but aside from the fact that the USA and EU's sanctions on Syria are a crime against humanity in pursuit of another regime-change war crime based on lies, those sanctions didn't apply to Iran—it was purely a provocative act of piracy. (On 19 August Gibraltar let the ship go, over US objections.)
- On 10 July, the British staged a provocation in the Gulf by having an empty oil tanker, the *British Heritage*, sail through the Strait of Hormuz without its transponder on and closely shadowed by British Navy Frigate the HMS *Montrose*. Sailing without a transponder is a danger to other shipping, and as Iran is responsible for shipping on its side of the Strait, an Iranian ship attempted to intercept the tanker before the *Montrose* bore down and warned it off.

- On 19 July, another British ship, the *Stena Impero*, was detained by the Iranian Revolutionary Guard after also sailing with its transponder off and moving in the wrong traffic pattern. It must be suspected that this was the outcome the British hoped for: then-Foreign Secretary Jeremy Hunt loudly and shamelessly pontificated that “these seizures are completely unacceptable”, insisting that “all ships can move safely and freely in the region” (but not Gibraltar apparently).
- There are a number of other claims of Iran attacking or capturing ships in the Gulf which are either unproven, or must be seen in the context of the Anglo-American escalation.

Now, Australia is buying into the lying Anglo-American narrative, citing the freedom of navigation chestnut to justify our presence.

A comparison must be made to China and the South China Sea, where our Anglo-American allies use the freedom of navigation excuse to sail naval forces with enough firepower to blow up the world. The two countries that most depend on freedom of navigation in both the Persian Gulf and South China Sea are not the USA and UK, but China and Iran. Notwithstanding the current crippling US sanctions, Iran depends entirely on shipping through the Gulf to sell its oil. Iran’s biggest customer is China, which depends on shipping through the Persian Gulf for half of its oil imports, which then must also be shipped through the South China Sea.

Bizarrely, Iran and China are being demonised as the risk to the shipping lanes they depend upon most, when in fact the real risk is Anglo-American provocations. This demonisation was taken to its extreme when Australian Liberal MP [Andrew Hastie compared the rise of China to that of Nazi Germany](#), and called China a “challenge” to our “democratic values”. Hastie made the comments in a 26 June speech to the neoconservative Henry Jackson Society in London, one of whose founders, Cambridge University professor Brendan Simms, trumpeted his Society’s vision in a 2011 article praising the Libya intervention entitled, “Democracy can be dropped from 10,000 feet” i.e. “democratic values” can be bombed into countries. After destroying Iraq, Libya, and Syria, Hastie’s neoconservative friends are now targeting Iran for a regime-change bloodbath, and fantasise about ultimately overthrowing China.

Australians must face the fact that Iran and China are not threatening the world, *we are*. It is our responsibility as citizens to demand our government withdraw from the Anglo-American regime-change agenda, assert a truly independent foreign policy, and support a new international economic order based on sovereign nation-states respecting each other’s sovereignty, but cooperating on economic development that can lift the world out of poverty and ensure prosperity for future generations.

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