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<b>Newspaper:</b>	<b><i>Sydney Morning Herald</i></b>
<b>Date published:</b>	<b>February 26, 2016</b>
<b>Title:</b>	<b>Defence White Paper and Military Escalation</b>

The Defence White Paper released on Thursday trashes any residual international reputation Australia may have as a peaceful nation. The White Paper defeats its own stated objective of keeping the Australian community safe by leading us down the destabilising and risky path of military escalation.

It concedes that any attack on Australian territory is an extremely remote prospect, so what is the real purpose of this great leap in spending and the acquisition of more sophisticated hardware?

The focus on the expanding military presence of China invites us to consider that nation a potential enemy. But China is no threat to us and it is in her interests to guard and protect sea lanes in the South China Sea. All that China actually threatens is the continuing military supremacy in and domination of the region by the USA.

China is asserting its role in the region, as one might expect from a growing and powerful country. For Australia to risk making China an enemy, because it suits the interests of the USA, is the height of folly.