

Marrickville Peace Group

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Senator the Hon. Marise Payne
PO Box 6100
Parliament House
Canberra
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March 29, 2018

Dear Senator Payne

The Marrickville Peace Group has corresponded with you in the past, on the matter of US marines being stationed in Darwin (e.g. letter from Faz Varjavandi, December 15, 2017, your reference MC17-000429).

With the arrival of the latest contingent of US marines being imminent, it is appropriate to put to you a question that has never been properly answered by yourself or any of your predecessors.

The question is inspired by sentences in the late Malcolm Fraser's book 'Dangerous Allies', in which he writes that the US marines might engage in military action on orders from Washington – and that we in Australia would only learn about it in the press in following days.

What assurance does the Australian government have that the US marines stationed in Darwin would not engage in military action on orders from Washington?

What guarantee is there that Australia retains the power to prevent such an eventuality?

Up to the present, the Marrickville Peace Group has received no satisfactory answer on this point. Consequently the group is of the view that no such assurance has been received – meaning that Mr Fraser's analysis is correct and that the US marine MAGTF could go into action on orders from Washington, with no input from the Australian government in Canberra.

I hope that you are able to contradict this view.

Yours sincerely

Nick Deane
for Marrickville Peace Group.