

Australian establishment endorses Trump's fascistic UN speech

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The bulk of the Australian political and media establishment has endorsed—either explicitly or implicitly by their silence—the fascistic rant delivered by US President Donald Trump to the UN General Assembly on Tuesday.

Foreign Minister Julie Bishop held private talks with Trump almost immediately after his speech. She told journalists: “I certainly didn’t raise any concerns with the president.”

That is the response of the Liberal-National Coalition government in Canberra to the threats by the leader of American imperialism, on the floor of the UN, to commit genocide and “totally destroy” the people of North Korea; provoke a war with Iran in the Middle East; invade Venezuela; and escalate a drive toward a military confrontation with China, Russia and any other challenge to the “national interest” of the American corporate oligarchy.

Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull appeared on breakfast television just after Trump concluded his UN address. He gave another unconditional guarantee that if war breaks out with North Korea, Australia “will come to America’s aid.” He voiced his full support for both the tone and content of Trump’s speech, which included the barely-veiled threat that the US will not hesitate to use nuclear weapons in any conflict.

Turnbull said Trump was “stating the reality.” He echoed Trump, declaring: “I don’t think this guy [North Korean leader Kim Jong-un] will commit suicide, because that’s the truth. I mean, President Trump and I have said exactly the same thing. If he attacks the United States, that is a suicide note for his regime. It is a disaster because many, many thousands of people will die. Many, many thousands of innocent people will die.”

Bishop reported that during her meeting with Trump

and US ambassador to the UN Nikki Haley, they had “a rather detailed discussion on what options are available to the international community and what is [North Korean leader] Kim Jong-un’s end game.”

While China, Russia, Germany, France and other countries are raising concerns over Trump’s speech, the Turnbull government is stepping forward to serve as an international mouthpiece for Washington.

Defence Minister Marise Payne will hold talks on North Korea and other “security” issues with US Defense Secretary General Jim Mattis today. Foreign Minister Bishop will address the UN General Assembly on Friday to give Australia’s full backing to the US war threats.

The Labor Party opposition is playing its part. Labor leader Bill Shorten and foreign affairs spokesperson Penny Wong leave on Saturday for South Korea and Japan. As the Special Broadcasting Service (SBS) commented, the trip was to “show Australia’s solidarity with the two countries, which could wear the fall out of any North Korean attack.”

No Labor Party figure has criticised any aspect of Trump’s speech. In August, Shorten told parliament: “Australians should be reassured that on this matter of North Korea and our national security, the politics of Labor and Liberal are working absolutely together.”

Amid the diplomacy, US satellite and spy bases in Australia are intimately involved in identifying targets for attack in the event of military strikes against North Korea. Air bases in northern Australia are at the disposal of long-range American bombers. A flotilla of Australian warships has been dispatched on a three-month tour of the Asia-Pacific region to conduct training exercises with the militaries of countries that are broadly aligned with the US, and against China.

It is approaching six years since the former Labor

government fully embraced the Obama administration's "pivot to Asia" in November 2011 and agreed to the expansion of US military bases in Australia. Since then, virtually the entire establishment has fallen into line with a militarist pro-US foreign policy that is aimed at preparing for the prospect of war with China, Australia's largest export market and trading partner.

Turnbull is among those who have shifted most notably. In 2011, as a prominent figure in the Coalition opposition, he expressed reservations about Labor's alignment with the anti-China pivot. He stated: "An Australian government needs to be careful not to allow a doe-eyed fascination with the leader of the free world to distract from the reality that our national interest requires us truly and not just rhetorically to maintain both an ally in Washington and a good friend in Beijing."

Six years later, Turnbull's support for, and fascination with Donald Trump borders on sycophantic. The Australian establishment, however, is not simply acting as a lapdog or puppet of Washington. The pro-US stance flows from the strategic and economic objectives that the Australian capitalist class shares with its far more powerful American counterparts.

Australia is an imperialist power with significant interests in the South Pacific, South East Asia, North East Asia and Antarctica, which it asserts primarily by serving as a junior partner of the US. The dominant position in Australian ruling circles is that these interests are threatened by China's growing geo-strategic influence and the weakening of American power.

Moreover, the Australian corporate elite has vast economic relations with the United States. Two-way direct and indirect investment between the two countries stood at \$1.45 trillion in 2015. The bulk of the banks and corporations operating in Australia have substantial American shareholders. Conversely, in 2013, Australian-owned business operations in the US held assets totalling \$322 billion and generated sales of \$65.3 billion.

It is for the profits and wealth of the Australian capitalist elite that the political establishment has committed, behind the backs of the population, to joining a potential nuclear war on the Korean Peninsula and the drive toward war with China.



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