

Australian government cynically tries to distance itself from war on Iran

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As the US has resumed its bombardment of Iran, the Australian Labor government, backed by a complicit corporate media, has sought to avoid any discussion of the war crime that is underway. To the extent that government ministers have even mentioned the war, it has been to present Australia as an uninvolved bystander that has called for an end to the hostilities.

The line is a transparent and cynical attempt to distance Labor from the war because of widespread popular opposition to the criminal assault and anger over the social consequences in resurging inflation. Labor is trying to cover-up the reality that it enthusiastically supported the launching of the war and has supported it, not only politically and diplomatically, but also materially through the deployment of weapons and troops.

The general silence from the political and media establishment is all the more striking given the scale of what is unfolding.

Since the US dispensed with the charade of supposed peace talks earlier this month, it has carried out the most intensive bombardment since President Donald Trump launched his sneak attack on the night of February 28. On July 13 alone, the US military struck an estimated 140 targets, and bombing is occurring every day.

The US has reimposed a naval blockade. On Wednesday, a report in the *Wall Street Journal* revealed discussions in the White House about a possible ground invasion, which would be a monumental crime, dwarfing even the 2003 onslaught on Iraq.

Despite that, it appears that Labor Prime Minister Anthony Albanese has not commented on the war's resumption against Iran, or been asked about it by a journalist, for more than a week.

Labor Foreign Minister Penny Wong has also said little. In a July 10 interview with Sky News, as full-scale bombardment was being resumed, Wong stated: "We've been clear for some time that we believed a de-escalation and a ceasefire was necessary and the Prime Minister made that clear some time ago."

When the host noted that full-scale war appeared to be resuming and asked whether the ceasefire was over, Wong blandly responded: "It's certainly been fraying around the edges for some time, hasn't it?"

The cynicism of Labor's professed calls for a ceasefire was summed up by another Sky interview with assistant defence minister Peter Khalil on Tuesday. Asked about the US bombardment, Khalil vaguely declared that it had been a "very tumultuous time for a number of years now globally and, of course, with the Strait of Hormuz," i.e., the US naval blockade.

After Khalil repeated the stock phrases about a ceasefire and "deescalation," the host described the government line as a "rare break" in the US-Australia alliance and asked whether Labor's purported opposition to the war would be raised directly with Trump.

Khalil hosed that down straight away by declaring Australia's support for a "ceasefire" had been made publicly, there was no pressing of the US administration to change its trajectory and certainly no breach in the alliance. Khalil noted that he was conducting the interview from Washington, where he was engaged in talks about deepening Australia's military collaboration with the Trump administration.

The mealy-mouthed rhetoric, in other words, is exclusively for public consumption. Both Wong and Khalil blithely ignored the reality that it was the US that blew up any prospect of a ceasefire, which was always simply a means of preparing a new escalation

after the initial American onslaught failed to achieve its aim of regime-change.

The real position of the Labor government remains what it was on February 28, when Albanese was among the first and most enthusiastic world leaders to explicitly support the illegal US war. The Labor prime minister repeated Trump's obscene claim that the assault was motivated by humanitarian concern for the people of Iran, as well as the lie that it was necessary to prevent Iran from acquiring a nuclear weapon, despite Iran's consistent assurances that it was not doing so and allowing inspectors in who have confirmed that.

Labor's immediate embrace of the war, noted in the international press, was all the more notable under conditions where various European leaders were wary of openly identifying themselves with the assault, for fear of becoming embroiled in another US-led quagmire in the Middle East.

In that sense, Albanese's statement was a declaration that Australia was among the most reliable allies of US imperialism, committed to supporting all of its illegal wars and military operations, not only in the Middle East but globally. The support has extended beyond politics and diplomacy.

- The US strikes on Iran have almost certainly used intelligence from the joint Pine Gap spy base in central Australia, which collects information from US satellites covering a vast swathe of the world's surface, including the entirety of the Middle East.

- On March 4, 2026, the US Navy submarine USS Charlotte torpedoed and sank the Iranian Navy frigate IRIS Dena, killing at least 87 sailors, off the coast of Sri Lanka. The Iranian vessel had been participating in international exercises and was known to be unarmed. Australia was directly involved in this barbaric war crime, with three Australian Defence Force personnel aboard the Charlotte, as part of deepening "interoperability" under the AUKUS military pact.

- On March 10, Labor announced the deployment of medium range air-to-air missiles, 85 ADF personnel and a Wedgetail aircraft to the United Arab Emirates, to engage in direct hostilities against Iran. They joined a permanent deployment of Australian troops at US bases in the UAE. The Wedgetail, benignly described as a "surveillance" craft is in fact a mobile command centre, which can collect and distribute targeting data in real time.

Defence Minister Richard Marles would later admit that the Wedgetail's data was instantaneously accessible to the US military, meaning it was almost certainly used in targeting the bombardment of Iran.

- In early April, it was reported by the media that 90 Special Air Service (SAS) commandos had been secretly dispatched to the Middle East the previous month. The only purpose of such a deployment would be to prepare direct Australian participation in a ground invasion. Marles and other government ministers refused to confirm the deployment, but their comments were a non-denial.

That fits into a pattern of complete secrecy. While the deployment of the Wedgetail and accompanying troops was initially presented as a four-week operation, media reporting in May and June indicated that the military plane remained in the UAE. There have been no statements from the government or the military indicating its withdrawal or the lengthening of its deployment, so the public is completely in the dark.

The reality, which Labor is seeking to conceal, is that Australia is completely integrated into the American war machine and is a component of all of its intrigues, crimes and aggressive military preparations, from the Middle East to Europe and the Indo-Pacific, where the continent is being transformed into a frontline base for a catastrophic US-led war against China.



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