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**Sent:** Tuesday, 30 September 2008 21:42  
**To:** White Paper  
**Subject:** WWW Submission: 3. Army/Land Power [SEC=UNCLASSIFIED]

Name: Simone Siracusa

Submission: I would like to put forward my thoughts on AUstralian Defence Force policy. I have tried to contain them to the three questions asked.

1. What role should armed forces play?

The Australian armed forces should not be doing the US armies 'dirty work', that is, providing in some cases pristine natural environments for military exercises as occurs with the Talisman Sabre wargames. The Talisman Sabre wargames shows the world Australia's increasing alignment with the US forces and US government policy. This is possibly dangerous strategically given the number of enemies the US has globally. Australia should be under no obligation to give up vast tracts of land and sea for a super power to practice wargames. Has the permission of the first Australians, the Indigenous peoples of this country, been gained for the army of another nation to practice war on this soil?

Also the Australian defence forces should not be involved in imperialist ventures such as assisting the US government to invade foreign countries in order to move towards dominance of world affairs (read Iraq war). Australia should not be involved in wars that kill hundreds of thousands of civilians just so a superpower, the US, can secure oil, land and greater influence over international relations and power. How can Australia's involvement in such wars benefit ordinary Australians? I certainly don't think that Australian's are safer because of it.

Rather the Australian armed forces should be engaged in,

-the defense of people and the natural environment, eg, to be involved in crisis situations such as natural disasters and/or to be a stabilising presence in situations where conflict has broken out.

-prevention of conflict and conflict resolution, including aid and education programs. Conflict occurs where people's needs are either not met or perceived to not be met. By more equitable distribution of resources across the globe and providing assistance in crises, conflict can be lessened, perhaps avoided.

-building cooperative relationships with other countries, particularly neighbouring countries

-There is great scope for the Australian defence (not 'armed') forces to play a role in peace education and earth repair. By nurturing life rather than practicing killing great opportunities open up.

2. What kinds of armed forces should we develop?

The Australian Defense Forces should be assessing the risks to Australia's security and putting in place measures to protect Australia's security without resorting to increasingly expensive high tech systems that in reality kill greater numbers of people (read civilians) and continue to create problems for our natural environment.

The Australian army should be prepared to risk entering conflict where all other avenues to conflict resolution have been exhausted. By entering conflict I mean that Australian defence forces should be prepared to put personnel in the line of fire and not be about pressing buttons behind a desk that executes operations that kill innocent civilians on a grand scale.

3. Can we afford such forces?

My answer is that it depends on what kinds of armed forces we have and what they are engaged in. In an environment where many Australians are unable to see their life opportunities fulfilled due to economic and social disadvantage, I think the first priority should be towards better health, housing and education resources for all people living in Australia. Greater public spending also needs to occur in the area of repair of our natural environment and preparations for changing our lifestyles so we can live in a way that does not plunder the delicate ecosystems that sustain life on this planet. The armed forces are a highly resource intensive activity. What plans does the Australian armed forces have to completely and genuinely reduce its environmental footprint? Can Australia and the world afford the Australian armed forces activities?

I agree to my submission being published on the Defence website

I agree to my submission being quoted in the Community Consultation Report