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Submission: military service in my family goes back, {traceably}, to world war one. most, active war service! my own service was an exception, as a regular army medic from 1977 to 1982, i now count myself fortunate the americans didn't need us. {at the time i varily believed her majesty commanded us, but if nothing else, recient wars have put that romantic notion to rest}.

Freedom for Australia is what we are continually told is the cause of our military sacrifice, and it's aim. it is patently ridiculous to say we're free when another power tells us not only when to go to war but even picks the regiments it wants us to send! The nature of this "freedom" was graphically illistrated when for the first time since WW2 we asked for help in East Timor, and what did we get? imagine if we said to them at their first oil war, "well we'll send you some communication specialists, let us know if it gets out of hand , and we might talk of how we may help more." CAN YOU IMAGINE?

Do not think our WW2 dept to these people can never be paid. Remember "Garden Island", the ships from coral we repaired, at least once, a half ship. it was so stratigically advantageous to have Australia as a friendly base in those days that they would have had to take us if we hadn't needed to invite them in!

Mr. George Bush put it best when he said "America will never sigh up to anything it thinks is not in it's financial interest". Then, he was talking of nothing less trivial than the future of humanity! {kyoto talks} The hard reality is that if we are threatened, the Americans will help us IF,,, they percieve it is in THEIR interests to do so!

Weather we buy tanks from them, weather we exersise with them, or weather we fight for them, in the end, these factors will be subjects for news sound bytes, or radio talkback but the Pentagon decision will be based on somthing like George Bushes statement.

In the meantime we must take account of what our "FREEDOM" is costing us even without the blood factor.

Stratigically, we are ill equiped for our own needs but reasonably well kitted out for fighting cold war style battels for , and with America. {Australian Strategic Institute's Tank purchase assessment} for example.

Environmentally, our military has been exempt from normal environmental regulations which, on it's own is a risk, but with the Americans now having control, with their greater numbers, we may never find out it was them who created a particular problem (say shallwater bay), till we've all died from it . These fanatics think nothing of stuffing every whales sonar if "it will save one american submariner's life" Quote from an American congressman.

Terrorism, not hard to see a chicken and an egg here. Most terrorists could'nt spell Australia, let alone find it on a map, before our "FRIENDS", started their war on terror. Invadeing countries based on American Values, has changed all that. Far from being an advantage, making us safer, we have become as hated as Americans, with those attendant consequences. The moral value of say, putting your radioactive waste in amunition, and dumping it on other countries, is but one of the many issues that now stain our military and national reputation due to our "friendship" with America.

The most fundamental requirement of any nation's military is the protection of it's own citizens. One might need to add in our case, from torture. Far from our military being able to stand up to the only country since ww2 that has tortured our citizens openly, we probably had people watching it! The most effective protection one had was from the marine corps of the people who were tortureing him! Incidentally, another consequence of our "friendship" is that when our friends do it, it's not torture but stress questioning. Not sure what we're supposed to call "rendition"?

In my history books, the British made simillar claims about the questioning of witches with, and i tell no lie, waterbording.

There is much gentlemen, that is against our "National Interest" in our relationship, as it now is, with the nation often held to be "Our Protector".

One might say that our most pressing military need is also the cheapest to realise, genuine national independence as a nation. New Zealand, our brothers in Arms, who will question their courage?

Not me,they've proved themselves in battle with us twice,and our little brothers have shown us it is possible to be an independant nation to!
With independance, might come a realistic appraisal, that as a nation of 19 million tax payers, we really shouldn't be able to equip as though we are a little southern hemisphere America.Like N.Z.we have a need for patrol boats, search and rescue craft, and lawyers of Maj. Morrie's calibra.To try to replicate American Values here means the more sucessfull we are the more we become like them.Those who know their culture only through Hollywood or the White House lawn see no peril in this, but few who've seen the culture up close and real, would want more of their "values" here.
One of their most malignant traits is their ever increasing subordination of all else to military spending. It is bankrupting them,and our leadership to now,seems bent on following.The pity of it is, that the ratio of spending to INsecurity, by any objective assesment, indicates that the more we spend the less safe we are becomming. If a mechanic tells you that after paying thousands, your car is worse than ever, but"it would have been much worse if he hadn't worked on it",what do you do?,,,,,,
Why do you think of us as dumber than you?
IS MISE michael cook

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