

US a Dangerous Ally: Former Australia PM. “The US will eventually bring Australia into a Direct Conflict with China”

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In his new book titled “Dangerous Allies,” Malcolm Fraser, the former prime minister of Australia worries that the Canberra’s dependence on the United States will eventually bring the nation into a direct conflict with China. His words echo those of Georgetown University professor Amitai Etzioni in an article he wrote for the Diplomat on Jan. 20.

Australia has always been strategically dependent on other great powers since gaining independence in 1901. It relied on the United Kingdom until World War II and then transferred that dependence to the United States afterwards. The relationship grew stronger with the signing of the Australia, New Zealand, United States Security Treaty in 1951. Fraser said that the treaty does not require the US to defend Australia, only needing to “consult” it in case of an attack.

In Fraser’s book, he describes how Australia’s blind faith in the UK before World War II left the country unprepared for war. He then goes on to say that currently many feel more vulnerable because of the country’s dependence on the United States. What Fraser and many Australian leaders fear most is that the United States will get Australia involved in a conflict not of its own making. “Australia effectively ceded to America the ability to decide when Australia goes to war,” said Fraser.

Fraser labelled the United States a “dangerous ally” as Australia has become progressively more enmeshed in American strategic and military affairs since the end of Cold War.

Just as with the armed conflicts in the Middle East, Fraser said that the conflict in Ukraine took place partially due to Washington’s attempt to include Ukraine in NATO. He went on to blame the United States lack of historical understanding towards Russia on the matter.

Washington’s policy to “contain” China can eventually lead to trouble for Australia. Believing that the United States will eventually use Australia as a base to attack China, Fraser suggested the removal of all American military facilities from Darwin in the north and Pine Gap in the center of the country as soon as possible. The former Australian leader added that the country should be more independent of the United States in both defense and foreign affairs. While recommending that Australia shore up its diplomatic activities throughout Asia and at the UN, he also suggested an increase in defense spending to 3% of the country’s GDP.

Jared McKinney, an American defense expert said that Fraser's book is often redundant and sometimes appears simplistic and one-sided in its historical interpretations. Still, he praised Fraser's great service to Australia and it said would be a shame if his arguments were unable to incite the sort of grand strategy debate.

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