

This Agreement should not go forward

The question at hand is whether the Agreement on Cooperation Related to Naval Nuclear Propulsion should be ratified. The agreement paves the way for Virginia class submarines to be acquired by Australia, along with nuclear fuel and relevant IP.

The previous Liberal government and the present Labor government have both committed Australia to AUKUS submarines. To my knowledge this was done without a Parliamentary inquiry, and without considered public debate.

Which is to say, up to now neither the Australian public nor the Parliament has been given an opportunity to veto the AUKUS agreement. *De facto*, this Agreement provide such an opportunity.

Should Australia ratify the agreement? The short answer is no.

War became obsolete with the dropping of the atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. The obvious intention of the AUKUS program is to increase the United States offensive capacity against China (after all these are attack submarines).

As a Chinese diplomat quipped, “Of course, your submarines are for sightseeing?”

Although the Labor government and the media portray China as a growing military threat against Australia, two former Australian Prime Ministers, one of whom speaks fluent Mandarin, assert that China is no threat to us.

However, by militarily aligning with the United States against China we could probably turn China into an enemy. And if the insanity of nuclear war erupts, well, there goes Pine Gap, US bases in the Northern Territory, Port Kembla if that’s the homeport for nuclear powered submarines... and who knows what else.

In the greater scheme of things Australia, America, Russia, China and other countries should be doing our best to tone down geopolitical military jockeying. The alternative – highly likely in my view – is that at some point, whether through technological accident or demented leadership on one side or another, things get out of hand, a nuclear exchange occurs, and our globalized civilization is destroyed within a matter of hours.

Proceeding down the path of AUKUS will not make us safer. This Agreement should not go forward.