



# Australian Citizens Party

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## MEDIA RELEASE

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### **ACP launches call for Senate inquiry into Canberra think tank funded by US to promote war with China**

The Australian Citizens Party has launched a video and petition calling for a Senate inquiry into the Australian Strategic Policy Institute (ASPI) for foreign interference.

The ACP's video charges: "A sinister, well-funded institute is warping Australian public opinion for the benefit of its foreign militaristic masters."

The video, "[Stop foreign influence: Investigate the Australian Strategic Policy Institute](#)", is available to watch on YouTube.

The ACP has combatted ASPI's disinformation and lies since at least 2014, when ASPI's then-director Peter Jennings ramped up an information warfare campaign against Australia's developing relationship with China, our biggest trading partner.

Jennings was formerly an advisor to Prime Minister John Howard, who advised Howard to commit Australia to join the illegal invasion of Iraq on a lie; crucially, Howard took that decision not to protect Australia from fictitious weapons of mass destruction, but to support the US alliance.

Jennings went on to become the main propagandist for the United States in Australia as Executive Director of ASPI in 2012-22, taking major funding from the US State Department, US Defence Department, and US private defence contractors, supplemented by funding from the British, Dutch, and Japanese governments, to relentlessly attack China on issues small and large—everything from lying that "China hacked the census" in 2016, to accusing China of espionage, foreign interference, cyberattacks, "genocide" and "slavery".

Jennings and ASPI's intent, on behalf of their US funders, was to poison Australia's relationship with its largest and most important trading partner, to bring Australia into line with the US-British strategic reorientation away from the Middle East and "war on terror" towards confrontation of China (and Russia); on more than one occasion in 2020, Jennings predicted war with China "within months".

In May 2022, Jennings was succeeded as ASPI Director by Justin Bassi, who, infamous for wearing CIA cuff links to Senate hearings, ensured a continuation of US foreign interference through ASPI.

At his explosive National Press Club appearance on 15 March 2023, former Prime Minister Paul Keating accurately called ASPI a "US cell".

The ACP has launched the following petition calling for a Senate inquiry:

#### PETITION

#### **Investigate the Australian Strategic Policy Institute for inciting Australia to war on behalf of foreign sponsors and interests**

TO THE HONOURABLE PRESIDENT AND MEMBERS OF THE SENATE IN PARLIAMENT ASSEMBLED:

This petition of the undersigned shows:

The Australian Strategic Policy Institute (ASPI) was chartered to be an "independent", "non-partisan" Australian defence research centre.

ASPI, however, has become an agent of blatant foreign interference in Australia. Although a Commonwealth government corporation, ASPI now receives almost 30 per cent of its funding from the United States and various European governments, and private corporations frequently associated with the so-called "defence industry" which profit financially from geopolitical tensions and wars.

The US and UK governments pay ASPI to relentlessly vilify China with exaggerated or outright false claims, including of foreign interference, cyberattacks, espionage, "genocide", economic infiltration to

gain control of strategic infrastructure, military expansionism, and more.

ASPI's analysis hypes China as a "threat" to Australia and the region, to incite Australia into acting contrary to our national interest in having a peaceful and prosperous relationship with China, our biggest trading partner, by joining a US war against China.

The conflict ASPI is promoting exposes Australia and its citizens to heightened military risks that are entirely avoidable, which is gross irresponsibility bordering on treasonous.

Your petitioners ask that the Senate:

Immediately establish an inquiry into ASPI, including:

- Its funding sources, expenditure, and any conflicts of interests;
- The credibility of its claims against China; and
- Foreign interference by ASPI's sponsors in Australian defence/foreign policy formulation.

[Click here to sign the petition.](#)