

# FORTRESS AUSTRALIA?

Peter Adamis 3 July 2014

Australia is beset by many domestic and international challenges. The Abbott government is taking appropriate positive action to block, heal, consolidate, prevent, seal and bring about change to offset the negative forces and challenges it faces. I wonder whether we are creating a generation of isolationists and a fortress mentality. A mindset that may have adverse outcomes for future generations.



Challenges such as: public complacency, illegal refugee boats intrusions, cyber warfare, low population rates, cultural misinformation, international terrorism, attitude to welfare handouts, loss of confidence in law makers, mistrust of institutions, gender misinformation, right to life & abortion disagreements, border security, shifting political trends, rise of extremist groups, global financial standing, a declining mining boom, the rise of China, India, Brazil and resource hungry nations are all matters that should concern Australians. These challenges when they are grouped together as such, if not addressed head on, can easily overwhelm any nation, especially when the people are not united to overcome those challenges.

In the absence of any identifiable hostile acts, isolated as an island from the rest of the world, and relying solely on the governments institutions to safe guard Australians interests are deluding themselves that the Government alone can address all of the challenges. History has been a good teacher and a leveller of nations and empires that fail to be united and always have disintegrated by the decay within. Australians need to take a greater interests in the affairs of government at all levels and contribute to its economic stability, security wellbeing and longevity.

From volunteering with non profit organisations, voicing a opinion at local government, assisting and supporting any of the many diverse cultural community groups, partaking in government programs that enhance the quality of life, balancing work and home without causing undue stress, giving it your best, taking an interest in sporting activities, supporting cultural events, consulting with and supporting government initiatives, supporting our defence and pare military organisations, getting involved with social media, assisting the young and aged, reporting illegal acts, reporting and preventing violence, setting an example and keeping abreast of your immediate environment.

It sounds corny and utopian does it not and one can easily be accused of being a 'goody goody and self righteous', but the fact of the matter is that it is what people see to find in this age of global technology. Whatever ever one may think or feel, it is true that we all want a life, that is free of negativity, to make our environment a pleasant one as far as possible and not have to worry about an uncertain future.

This is not a utopian concept but it is possible if Australians work together to create a nation that can set an example to the rest of the world. At this very moment we stand upon the threshold of history in creating a great nation. This great nation can only be created if we are all united as Australians and not as separated diverse cultures that choose to travel a path that is not consistent with Australian values.

What this means is that we need to review the cultural paradigms of the past and discard the inappropriate, the irrelevant, the untruths, the failed institutions and create new ones that are consistent with today's society by blending the many different threads that have been introduced into Australian and make that fabric indestructible, a fabric that can survive any future challenge.

I am not convinced that stopping the boats and returning them to their origins is a good policy as I am of the belief that its best to widen our doors to legal migration based on what our skills and needs are. Illegal boats and refugees are a symptom of what ails the world today and we must act responsibly if we are to be taken seriously. Refugees that are returned will be subjected to such harsh treatment and potential long term confinement and death. The outcomes would make us accessory to murder and other solutions should be found.

Review our history and put it right, Australia was never discovered by Captain Cook, and for the uninformed William Dampier was the first Englishman to discover Australia, but the discovery by Europeans belongs to other nations who failed to see the splendour of Australia and its vast recourses. Ensure that our indigenous people enjoy the same rights and access to all the benefits enjoyed by the remainder of Australia. These are but two examples and to be sure there are many others. We need to create an image that we want to project to the world, an image that would be the envy of all and example to other nations. We should also look towards creating industries that can harness the power , intelligence, skills, life skills, knowledge and qualifications of the mature age.

I say all of the above because the Europeans see us new comers on the block even though we have been instrumental in shedding our men and women's blood and paying the ultimate sacrifice to keep them free. Asia looks upon our vast country as the food bowl and an island for extracting our natural resources and a place to be diplomatically subjugated by coercion and economic servitude. The Americas are looking at us as manpower to be utilised as potential canon fodder and diplomatic tools to be used on the world stage.

We see ourselves as mere mortals who are not sure where we stand and where we belong under the global umbrella. We must not be afraid to become the great nation that we are capable of being. It's time we woke up to the realities of life and realise that we have the capabilities, the manpower, the resilience, tolerance, intelligence, the strength and the skills to take a far greater role in our immediate region of influence and contribute further to global peace, prosperity and well being. We are quite capable of being a great people and yet we wallow in self doubt that we are not equal in the face of other nations contributions.

To assist readers and those who take an interest in such matters, I have included but a few articles of the challenges currently faced by Australia. Challenges such as Illegal refugee boats, Cyberwarfare, Terrorism and government action. These are but a few of the outstanding issues we as Australians are faced with. Failing to understand what we are being faced with on a daily basis should not come as a surprise when policies are put into place to redress the challenges. I do hope that somewhere, at some time, this article and others articles encourage current or future potential leaders to take up the mantle of leadership and lead this country out of its sleepy and complacent mindset.



***The Voice from the Pavement** - Peter Adamis is a Journalist/Commentator and writer. He is a retired Australian military serviceman and an Industry organisational & Occupational (OHS) & Training Consultant whose interests are within the parameters of domestic and international political spectrum. He is an avid blogger and contributes to domestic and international community news media outlets as well as to local and Ethnic News. He holds a Bachelor of Adult Learning & Development (Monash), Grad Dip Occupational Health & Safety, (Monash), Dip. Training & Assessment, Dip Public Administration, and Dip Frontline Management. Contact via Email: [abalinx@netspace.net.au](mailto:abalinx@netspace.net.au) or via Mobile: 0409965538*



## **CANBERRA DEPLOYS NEW CYBER ARSENAL**

Christian Edwards 2 JULY 2014 GLOBALPOST

SYDNEY, July 2 (Xinhua) -- Australian government will look to a new think-tank on cyber security established in partnership with the University of New South Wales (UNSW) to stave off cyber attacks. According to a survey this week by BT Security, an arm of British Telecom, more than six in ten Australian companies are vulnerable to cyber attacks.

BT Security says that some 63 percent of Australian respondents were victims of 'multiple crashes lasting up to six hours,' a figure far higher than the global average of just 41 percent. According to the survey, Australian organizations took an average 12 hours to fully recover from an especially powerful attack and that cyber intrusions are literally 'wreaking havoc with the IT systems of Australian enterprises.' Established just two weeks ago, deep inside the Australian Defence Force Academy's academic hub of UNSW Canberra.

The revelation that in the last year six of every ten local companies surveyed suffered multiple system crashes (the result of distributed denial-of-service (DDoS) attacks) will not have been lost on the Department of Defence, which has more than 50 years collaboration with UNSW before launching the Australian Centre for Cyber Security (ACCS) on June 16. The ACCS will turn to experts, academics and students to analyse threats such as the DDoS attacks which use networks of compromised computers to send millions of requests to online services and websites at once, taking them offline. The launch of the ACCS comes in the wake of Prime Minister Tony Abbott's jaunt to the U.S. to meet with President Barack Obama, after which both nations vowed to strengthen cooperation in cyber issues, including cyber defence and cyber security incident response.

According to one insider, a summary of U.S. -- Australia relations issued by the White House around the same time as the ACCS opened without fanfare suggested cooperation on "cyber defence and cyber security incident response" would be a priority in standing with President Obama's much discussed 'Asia pivot.' With Australia's cyber security capabilities clearly maturing, the two long-standing partners will align their computer emergency response teams (CERTs) and share cyber-threat information, with one of the ACCS' stated goals to protect and inform government organizations and "provide strategies to fight off potential dangers."

According to government sources here, the ACCS is central to the "largest cohort of cyber security researchers in Australia," and will provide "cutting-edge," thought-leadership in cyber warfare and crime through research, education and external management. To help mitigate these external threats to cyber security, the ACCS will source knowledge and ideas from its "arsenal of experts" in politics, cyber industry, defence, academia, individual and organizational users and media. The establishment of the new centre was initially put forward under the previous Gillard administration at the beginning of 2013 following a reported 400 cyber incidents against government systems between 2011-12. ACCS Director Jill Slay said the Centre draws on the skills of some of the "best cyber security experts" in the country, serving as thought leaders in legal, policy and technical domains.

"UNSW applies this leadership through research, teaching and engagement with the government, Defence and business community," Professor Slay said. UNSW Canberra said that the ACCS comes at a time when cyber security "is moving to the top of global political, scholarly and commercial agendas." Earlier this year, Simon Hansen with Australian Strategic Policy Institute's (ASPI) International Cyber Policy Centre told the ABC that the lack of mature discussion about Australia's cyber security threats will 'ultimately jeopardize Australia's future security and prosperity.' "Despite the long-held tradition of not speaking on intelligence and security matters, there is a likelihood that not debating these issues will obfuscate real risks for Australia."

Certainly a more open dialogue with partners across the Asia Pacific, including Australia's key trading partner China - instead of arms-length accusations, would go a long way to building a untied, regional approach to this new and dangerous frontier. With the U.S. and its allies rocked by a year of stunning disclosures led by the renegade whistleblower Edward Snowden - including a revelation that Australia has been listening in on neighbour Indonesia - the ASPI said, there are 'more hazards for Australia in not saying anything, than saying something.' "Keeping threats in the dark does nothing for building awareness about the growing challenges posed by offensive cyber activities."

<http://www.globalpost.com/dispatch/news/xinhua-news-agency/140702/roundup-canberra-deploys-new-cyber-arsenal-0>



## IT DEPARTMENTS HAVE A SHAKY GRASP OF THE MOST EFFECTIVE SECURITY MEASURES

Security News 02 Jul 2014 Darren Allan. Research carried out by security firm Avecto (which specialises in Windows privilege management) has found that IT departments are making mistakes when it comes to their perception of the most important elements of an IT security strategy.

Avecto has uncovered a disconnect between the perceptions of IT staff and the reality of security, with its study which compared the strategies which IT departments believed to be effective against the Australian Department of Defence's (ADoD) Top 35 Mitigation Strategies report. The latter, which was carried out in conjunction with the Ponemon Institute, is based on real-world data and serious cyber-attacks and vulnerability assessments carried out by Australian government agencies. Andrew Avanesian, VP of Global Professional Services at Avecto, noted: "When it comes to security strategies, the perceptions of IT departments are wide of the mark. We want to help raise awareness within the security market to help decision makers prioritise the strategies that are truly the most effective."

The most gaping issues were found to be antivirus software and data loss prevention solutions, which were both ranked in the top ten of the most effective security measures by IT departments in Avecto's study, at ninth and tenth respectively. However, the ADoD report ranked these far lower at thirtieth and twenty-sixth. Web content filtering and email content filtering were two further areas with a major disparity, ranked second and third by IT departments, but eighteenth and seventeenth by the ADoD. Avecto notes that this means security budgets aren't being correctly spent, and are failing to focus on the most important areas.

The top four areas according to the ADoD report are application white listing, application patching, OS patching, and minimising admin privileges. Avanesian commented: "It seems that IT professionals are opting for centrally managed technologies, perhaps because they are deemed easier to implement." He continued: "In order to defend against advanced threats you need to have a defence in depth approach. Antivirus software was fine fifteen years ago, but with malware evolving at an incredible pace it's just not effective enough. With security budgets under constant scrutiny, every penny needs to be justified."

[http://www.itproportal.com/2014/07/02/it-departments-have-a-shaky-grasp-of-the-most-effective-security-measures/?utm\\_source=feedburner&utm\\_medium=feed&utm\\_campaign=Feed%3A+itproportal%2Frss+\(Latest+ITProPortal+News\)](http://www.itproportal.com/2014/07/02/it-departments-have-a-shaky-grasp-of-the-most-effective-security-measures/?utm_source=feedburner&utm_medium=feed&utm_campaign=Feed%3A+itproportal%2Frss+(Latest+ITProPortal+News))



## **TOUGHER TERROR LAWS ON WAY**

THE AUSTRALIAN JULY 03, 2014

AUSTRALIAN police could be given the power to independently collect evidence and conduct surveillance operations in war zones such as Syria and Iraq as part of the biggest overhaul of national security laws in a decade. The changes, which will start with legislation to be presented to parliament in a fortnight and continue over coming months, are designed to reflect two fundamental shifts in the security environment.

The revival of international jihadism and the advance in communications technology that has rendered many of the eavesdropping provisions in Australia's laws redundant. The new laws draw on government reports released over the past 18 months dealing with a raft of subjects. From communications interceptions to the admissibility of evidence gathered in foreign jurisdictions and the power to rapidly disrupt people's travel through methods such as suspending their passports.

The changes will be designed to break down legal barriers that prevent Australia's domestic and foreign spy services from co-operating quickly and effectively, making it easier for the Australian Security Intelligence Organisation to conduct controlled operations, such as infiltrating terror cells. And with an increasing number of Australians fighting overseas in theatres such as Syria and Iraq. Consideration is also being given to allowing ASIO's overseas counterpart, the Australian Secret Intelligence Service, to pass on intelligence about - Australians to ASIO under certain circumstances.

As Attorney-General George Brandis sought yesterday to build bridges into the Muslim community in the hope of stemming the flow of Australians travelling to Syria, he also foreshadowed a comprehensive review of the nation's security architecture. "We are reviewing the entire suite of legislation to ensure that if there are identified gaps in that legislation those gaps will be corrected so as to make the Australian people secure," Senator Brandis said, as he stood flanked by Muslim community leaders in the halls of Parliament House.

"It was one of the purposes of this morning's meetings, to raise that with that the Muslim community leaders." The changes, likely to be introduced over the course of the year — and probably into next year — are shaping up to be the most significant revamp of national security laws since 2005, when John Howard instituted a suite of anti-terrorism measures in the years after the September 11 attacks on New York and Washington. Concerned by the rapid gains of jihadists in Iraq and the spectre of a new age of Islamist terror, the Abbott government is moving quickly to counter the attraction posed by groups such as Islamic State, formerly known as the Islamic State of Islam in Syria and al-Sham.

"The radical Islamist ideology propagated by organisations such as (Islamic State) and al-Nusra has nothing, holds nothing, for young Australians," Senator Brandis said. He said the government would introduce the first of the reforms into parliament in the week starting July 14 but he made it clear more were coming. "I'm not saying the legislation that will be introduced the week after next will be the only legislative reform, because it won't be," Senator Brandis said. "The government is ... looking carefully at all existing legislation that bears upon this issue."

The first tranche of reforms will enact the recommendations of a bipartisan parliamentary committee on national security reform, which reported in the dying months of the Labor government. They will extend the power of ASIO to target or disrupt suspect computer networks, for example those used by jihadists to communicate, and allow the agency to use third-party computers under warrant. Among the most pressing are reforms to the foreign evidence collection laws. Despite a surge in Syrian-related terrorism investigations, the Australian Federal Police has issued only a handful of arrest warrants for Australians in Syria, understood to be fewer than half a dozen.

This reflects not the scale of the problem, which has grown rapidly, but the difficulties police face gathering admissible evidence in jurisdictions with no functioning, or co-operative, government. It is expected the Abbott government will adopt recommendations by outgoing National Security Legislation Monitor Bret Walker SC, who in his most recent report argued the AFP should be allowed to conduct surveillance operations in foreign countries where it was impossible to gain the consent of local authorities. That evidence could then be tendered in an Australian court as part of a terrorist prosecution. "Countries in the middle of a civil war such as Syria or failed states such as Somalia are two current examples," Mr Walker said. He also recommended amending the Evidence Act "so as to permit the collection of information and its admission into evidence, from foreign countries, where political circumstances or states of conflict render impracticable the making of a request".

<http://www.theaustralian.com.au/national-affairs/policy/tougher-terror-laws-on-way/story-e6frg8yo-1226975774490>



## TOUGHER LINE PLANNED FOR JIHADISTS FIGHTERS

July 1, 2014 David Wroe *National security correspondent*. Concerned: George Brandis. *Photo: Alex Ellinghausen*

Fears over Australian teens joining Iraq fight. Family of Western Sydney boy Abdullah Elmri fears he and a 16 year-old friend may be on their way to join the fighting in Iraq. The Abbott government is examining ways to make it easier to prosecute Australian jihadist fighters returning from the Middle East, amid growing fears of the creation of a mini-state in the region that could export terrorism. Fairfax Media understands that under the changes, authorities would have enhanced powers to investigate citizens fighting abroad and present the evidence gathered in Australian courts.

At present prosecutions would be hampered because such evidence is often inadmissible, experts say. The Independent National Security Legislation Monitor says that "not merely prosecutions but also investigations are at present stillborn on account of problems of foreign evidence, that might otherwise have succeeded". The revelations came as the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) declared the establishment of an Islamic caliphate based on the territory it has seized across Syria and Iraq - prompting Attorney-General George Brandis to warn of the emergence of an effective terrorist state.

Senator Brandis said ISIL's increasingly clear aims were neither merely random acts of terrorism nor territorial conquest, but rather "millennial" ambitions of a new religious era enforced by violence. "It is, as the Prime Minister said last week, an ambition to create a new state, a new political structure, which among other things will seek to export terrorism," he said. "The actors in these events have ambitions so vast that they regard their enemy as the world that we know as the product of the enlightenment. The values of the liberal democratic states are their target and they are a motivated and lethal enemy."

The development had "very serious" national security implications for Australia, he said.

"Australians who travel to Syria and now to northern Iraq to the ISIL insurgency-controlled areas in the Middle East are likely to be reinforced in their radical interpretation of Islam and are likely to pursue jihad in the Western world including in particular where they've come from within Australia." The government believes about 150 Australians are involved with extremist groups including ISIL - a figure that is causing great concern because of the high likelihood those people will try to carry out acts of violence here. On Tuesday, Prime Minister Tony Abbott said it was disappointing that "large numbers of Australians" have gone to fight with militants in Syria and Iraq.

"The determination of this government is to ensure that just as we have stopped the illegal boats coming to Australia that as far as we humanly can we stop jihadists from coming to Australia," he told ABC radio. "Because these people do seem to be radicalised and militarised and we don't want people who are a menace to our community walking around on our streets." About 30 Australians went to fight in Afghanistan, of whom 19 were suspected of involvement in terrorism when they returned home and eight were convicted.

The government is understood to be closely examining proposals contained in a report released this month by the Independent National Security Legislation Monitor that would make it easier to prosecute such people when they return. For instance, the Australian Federal Police cannot investigate in a foreign country without the consent of that jurisdiction. Evidence gathered on Australians overseas cannot, moreover, be used in court without the agreement of an "appropriate consenting official" of the foreign country. The independent monitor, senior lawyer Bret Walker, recommended that the Attorney-General be able to waive these requirements where such co-operation was impractical, such as civil war-torn Syria.

<http://www.smh.com.au/federal-politics/political-news/tougher-line-planned-for-jihadists-fighters-20140630-3b4cy.html>



## REFUGEE BOAT FROM INDIA?

THE AUSTRALIAN JUNE 28,  
2014 David Crowe Political  
Correspondent & Paige Taylor WA  
Bureau Chief

IMMIGRATION Minister Scott Morrison today insisted there was no at-sea emergency concerning reported new boatloads of asylum seekers headed for Australia, including at least one from India. "A boat hasn't arrived — let's be quite clear," Mr Morrison told reporters in Melbourne this morning. However tonight a federal Labor MP said two boats had been intercepted late today and Christmas Island reception staff had been alerted. The minister this morning would not discuss whether a boat might be on its way from southern India despite reports that this was the case.



Mr Morrison would also not say whether he had ever talked to the government of India about preparing for such a situation or whether he was taking any steps to prepare for a boat from that country. The development could challenge the government's policy to turn back boats since it would be difficult, if not impossible, to turn an Indian boat back to Indonesia. If a boat did reach Australian waters, it would be the first since December 19. After the minister's comments, the ABC reported that an asylum seeker had spoken by satellite phone to warn of "huge waves and very bad conditions".

The report, which said the boat had set off from India but contained Tamil asylum seekers from Sri Lanka, quoted the man as saying the boat was at threat. The Federal Labor MP from Perth, Alannah MacTiernan, told ABC Radio tonight she understood that people on-board two asylum seeker boats has just been picked up by Border Protection authorities. ABC Radio said it was believed at least one vessel was from southern India and had more than 150 people on board, including 37 children. Ms MacTiernan told the ABC that staff at Christmas Island were "on stand-by waiting for instructions", but did not know whether the asylum seekers would go there or "be taken elsewhere".

"They're hearing the people are from south India but they're not clear whether or not they're originally Sri Lankan," she said. Refugee activists said today that a 21m boat had been at sea since June 13 and had sprung an oil leak. The oil was expected to run out earlier today. Refugee Action Coalition spokesman Ian Rintoul called Mr Morrison's attitude to issue "cavalier and dismissive". "We don't want to see the government waiting until it's too late," he said. Mr Rintoul said yesterday that the boat, with a passenger load that included 32 women and 37 children, had made contact with Australian maritime rescue authorities. Mr Rintoul said he spoke with the asylum-seekers on Thursday night and they were asking for help.

There was speculation on Christmas Island earlier today after an Australian Navy vessel appeared on the horizon overnight and remained within sight of the island. During previous successful turnbacks under Operation Sovereign Borders, asylum seekers have been transferred to Navy and Customs vessels and held for days within sight of the island. An Asylum boat near Christmas Island, Mr Morrison said today that the government did not comment on matters unless there was a significant event at sea, particularly when it involved the safety of life at sea. Christmas Islands forgotten, "There is no such report for me to provide to you today. If there was a significant event happening then I would be reporting it," he said.

"This is another day at the office for Operation Sovereign Borders. It's the same as yesterday, it's the same as tomorrow, we deal with threats as they present," he said. "And we are always mindful of issues of the safety of life at sea." Opposition immigration spokesman Richard Marles said today that he had heard reports of a second boat carrying people that left from Java also nearing Australian waters. Mr Marles said he had no doubt Australian Customs and the Navy would do their job and provide assistance when it become necessary, but called Mr Morrison's comments "a complete farce". Greens senator Sarah Hanson-Young said that turning a boat back to India was "simply not an option".

"If the Prime Minister intends on creating a diplomatic row with India by attempting to turn the boat back, he needs to be upfront out that," she said. The government has previously refused to give details about boats it has sent back or asylum-seekers it has intercepted and transferred to orange life boats and turned back.

<http://www.theaustralian.com.au/national-affairs/policy/refugee-boat-from-india-scott-morrison-is-not-saying/story-fn9hm1gu-1226969796110>