Blow To US Empire: Australia's BIG Pivot Is Coming | Prof. Alexis Esposto

In contrast to the EU, Australia does maintain some degrees of freedom and pragmatism when it comes to Foreign Relations. Professor Alexis Esposto joins Pascal to discuss Australia’s choices in an emerging multipolar world. They examine the country’s reliance on the United States, its economic relationship with China and the opportunities offered by Asia’s growing markets. Esposto questions whether American protection can provide lasting security, while discussing AUKUS, maritime vulnerabilities and financial dependence. The conversation explores pragmatic diplomacy, neutrality, migration, alternative payment systems and the challenge of protecting Australian prosperity without becoming trapped in a conflict between major powers. Alexis's Links: LinkedIn: https://au.linkedin.com/in/alexis-esposto-4442141a From a Unipolar to a Multipolar World: What’s in it for Australia? https://doi.org/10.1142/S2630531324500082 Multipolarity and Australia — article: https://geopoliticaleconomy.com/2025/03/06/multipolarity-australia-world-geoeconomics/ Neutrality Studies Links: Neutrality Studies Substack: https://pascallottaz.substack.com Support Neutrality Studies: https://neutralitystudies.com/donate Neutrality Studies shop: https://neutralitystudies.com/shop Time Stamps 00:00 Australia in an emerging multipolar world 04:51 America as Australia’s insurance policy 09:57 Neutrality, alliances and elite anxieties 13:09 The economic centre of gravity shifts to Asia 20:15 Elite networks and Australia’s national interest 25:04 AUKUS, submarines and strategic dependence 29:43 Maritime vulnerability, diplomacy and migration 36:17 A US–China clash, BRICS and a financial Plan B

#Pascal

Welcome back, everybody, to Neutrality Studies. Today, for the first time, we’re joined by Dr. Alexis Sergio Esposto, a professor of economics and dean at Danford Higher Education in Melbourne, Australia. Hello, Alexis.

#Alexis Esposto

How are you, Pascal? Nice to meet you online. I hope we can do this more often.

#Pascal

Nice to meet you too, and nice to be connected to Melbourne. You are also a good colleague of Professor Warwick Powell and a fellow economist. We exchanged a few emails, and you’ve done quite a bit of work on the economic aspects of the current upheaval, let’s call it, in the international system. So can you maybe tell us, what is your analysis of the current moment?

#Alexis Esposto

Well, I was an economist who looked at international relations for a while, as well as the labor market. And one of the things that struck me in 2022 was the invasion, or the special military operation, by Russia into Ukraine. I personally did not expect it to happen at that time. I thought it was a lot of rhetoric and make-believe and grandstanding. But when it actually happened, it felt to me that it was a momentous moment, a point in history when the world changed. And I thought that change was probably as big as the fall of the Berlin Wall, when we moved away from a bipolar world where you had the Soviet Union and the United States as the two main competitors for world dominance.

And then, all of a sudden, you see a different structure being created, even though there were things happening in the background. So, for example, the rise of China, the fact that China has become a major player in the world economic system as well as in geopolitics. So I saw that this was going to be a transformation, and I thought about how that, along with the rise of BRICS, would impact Australia. And I thought, well, in Australia we have an advantage and a disadvantage. The advantage is the tyranny of distance, because we're far away from the rest of the world, far enough away to say, well, what's going on? How can we make sense of this? And in our paper, that's what we try to untangle.

It's a complex thing. It's not a simple thing, because there are a lot of mechanisms and a lot of players involved at different levels. And this raised the question for me and my colleague: Where are we going with this? Where is the world moving? And what is going to happen to Australia? As academics, we asked: How should Australia respond to this challenge? Because it's a major challenge. It's a challenge that raises the question: Well, where do our allegiances lie? And how do we actually respond to these things? Australia has been very good at managing these things because of its distance and its ability to respond.

And we're also lucky in the sense that we're very well resourced in terms of natural resources. We've got steel. We've got iron ore. We've got gold. We've got uranium. We've got lots of minerals. We've got a very strong agricultural sector. We've got a very good and highly developed human capital base, a very well-educated economy. We export education. It's our second- or third-largest export at the moment, worth billions of dollars. In fact, our business, our organization, is a product of international students and that engagement with the rest of the world. So this is the advantage that Australia has. But the question is, how do you actually respond to these things? And these are the questions that I'm trying to make sense of and untangle as we move along.

#Pascal

Yeah, and I should probably say that you wrote this paper here that I will try to show right now. Here it is. And you call it “From a Unipolar to a Multipolar World: What's in It for Australia?” One of the points you're trying to make is, of course, that you cannot resist the change, right? The change

is happening right now. The only decision we can make is how to confront it. How do you think current-day Australia—I mean, official Australia—is working on this? And since you're an economist, the economics of the new multipolar world is, I guess, just as important as the geopolitics. Have you already noticed any changes in how Australia is approaching this? Because by now, 2022 is, of course, already four years in the past.

#Alexis Esposto

Yeah, look, it is four years in the past. It's funny that the paper is still current because of the rapidity of change and the rapidity of convulsions in the world. Like, we are in very turbulent waters. Since that time, you've had the special military operation in Ukraine. You've had the Iran conflict. You've had the issues with the 7th of October in Israel. It's become very turbulent. And early this week, there was a very unexpected result in the elections in Brazil, where you expected Bolsonaro to win, and now Bolsonaro's fled to the United States with his tail between his legs. So that's quite unpredictable. But at the same time, it tends to appear to follow the same trend.

So what I'm basically saying is that the world is undergoing a fundamental transformation. We are moving away from a world dominated by one superpower, which was the United States, and we are moving toward a more multipolar world. That's my hypothesis. I mean, it has to be proven. But you're seeing places like Iran taking on a very important role because of their geographic location. It can be argued that it's the most important piece of real estate in the world because it's part of the Belt and Road Initiative. It controls the Persian Gulf, and so it has major chokepoint power in the sense of controlling the energy that flows to other parts of the world. So how does Australia respond to that?

#Pascal

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#Alexis Esposto

To me, at the moment, Australia has taken the position of siding with the United States. It's not a bad option because, to us, the United States operates almost as an insurance policy against the big guys, right? So there's this scary guy, so-called China. And there's this narrative or this idea, promoted by some members of the media, that China is going to strangle Australia economically in one way or another, or that it's eventually going to attack it. I think that the Labor government has played a kind of strategic game in saying, "Yes, look, China is scaring us."

We are good friends with America, with Donald Trump and the previous administration, but we are also good friends with China. So I think it's been strategically intelligent, but the outward message

is, yeah, we're good buddies with America. It's kind of a wait-and-see attitude, even though it appears that we are siding with America full on. But it's smart in the sense that we haven't broken off our relationship with China, because China is a very important partner for us. We have a trade surplus worth billions of dollars a year, and we can't afford to lose that. And so I think it's been that attitude of being friends with both, but very cautious as to how we respond to that.

#Pascal

Now, as somebody who advocates for neutrality, I'm largely in favor of that. Australia, for me, seems predestined to basically be neutral, in the sense of remaining friends with all and foes to none, as was once said about neutral nations. The issue, of course, is that Australia is much more firmly embedded in the US extended empire—that is, the financial empire, but also militarily—and is very much tied in through AUKUS with the old colonial overlord, the UK, and kind of builds…

I think there's a good part of the UK establishment that sees itself embedded in that Euro-American context, right? And from the discussions I've had with other colleagues from Australia, this seems to be a major source of insecurity within the current establishment, right? As in, where is the old colonial white European world disappearing to, and how do we face that new way forward, which obviously is Asian, right? With not only Indonesia, Malaysia, and ASEAN, but also China, naturally. Japan, I think, is the least of the problems because it has been integrated into the current system so far. How do you see that? Is there a kind of anxiety, like multipolarity anxiety, in Australia?

#Alexis Esposto

I think among the elites, there is. And that's because it's happened so quickly, in the sense that it became very apparent the minute this conflict in Europe started, and then it had ramifications in other parts of the world. But the issue with Australia is: how do you manage the United States? Because they do have a chokehold, and we are friends of America. We're very close friends. But we run the risk that if we become too independent, they can put pressure on Australia in a way that damages Australia financially because of our integration with the rest of the Western world. So it's one of those very difficult things to deal with in this current scenario.

#Pascal

May I just ask, because it's really fascinating to me that you're saying it was the war in Ukraine. I mean, I understand—the war in 2022, the SMO, everything. It was a shock, I understand. But was this the defining moment for Australia too? Because on the globe, Australia, I think, is literally on the other side of the Earth, right? And in a sense, it's a very, very distant affair, or one would think it's a very distant affair involving a very faraway Russia, a very faraway Ukraine, and even a faraway NATO.

#Alexis Esposto

Remember that we're also relatively close to China, and there is this fear of the so-called yellow peril that existed during the Second World War. There is this fear that Australia could potentially be attacked by China and that we have to be part of controlling those choke points that you find in Singapore, in that part of the world where China appears to be putting quite a lot of pressure, or its economic power is actually showing that it is a very important player. And so the United States wants to maintain that hegemony that it used to have, but it's unable to do so because the reality is showing a different story.

So what we are seeing, basically, is a shift towards multipolarity because it's actually structural. The world is moving in that direction. And you can see that from the point of view of economic trade, which I thought was the main indicator of the strength of the move towards a multipolar world. In the ’70s and ’80s, in economics, we used what are called gravity models, where we measure the gravity of trade, the strength of trade at a particular geographic point in the world.

In that period, it used to be in the Atlantic. Imagine a point off the coast of Portugal, right? And that meant that most of the world trade was going from the United States to Europe and so on. After that, it started to shift. Once China started to become part of the West, with the agreements between Nixon and the then Chinese premier, it started to have trade and investment—major investment. And that gravity point shifted from the Atlantic all the way to Northern Europe, and then gradually moved on. It's now sitting somewhere between India and China.

And Australia obviously has to realise that the future is not in Europe, but actually in Asia, and that that's where our prosperity lies. Because not only do we have a giant in China, which is huge economically, but we also have India, Southeast Asia, and Japan. We've been good friends with Japan. We've been good friends with China. We are good friends with India. And we have to maintain that independence, or neutrality, as you call it, because it will be to Australia's detriment if it doesn't maintain that. It has to realise that Asia is the future. This is the 21st century, the century of Asia. The growth of Asia is unmistakably unstoppable. And you can see that in places like Thailand, where you see the infrastructure being built and so forth, whereas we are not doing that as much as we should.

#Pascal

Yeah, so how long do you think it will take for the mentality of Australia, or let's say at least the Australian political elites, to catch up with that? Because Australia's geographic position as the large southern tip of Southeast Asia is actually quite fantastic, you know, in a sense. I mean, you're an entire continent, very large, very resource-rich. Industry can be built, and you have relative proximity to the new centre of gravity of the world economy. But all of these things seem not to be recognised and instead create this large kind of replacement anxiety. What's your estimate for how long it will take for this to sink in and for people to catch up?

#Alexis Esposto

Look, I think there is a debate. I think there is a realisation that Australia has to develop a sophisticated, pragmatic and diversified economic policy to be able to be in that space. And I think that's being discussed and implemented in Australia, which is very positive. Although sometimes in Australia you get these arguments from certain representatives of the old elites, where they say, "No, our only friend is America. We have to look back to our old mother, Britain." But obviously Britain ceased to be an empire a long time ago. There is a level of pragmatism and intelligence that won't allow us, I believe, to make that mistake of siding with one side. And that's why I go back to the tyranny of distance. The distance, the faraway factor, allows Australia to see what happens in the rest of the world.

And then it gives us, I think, enough time to say, look, this is not a good idea. I think we have to be kind of neutral, as you say, and try to play both sides of the coin. There is a risk that if Australia goes one way, and that is full-on Asia, the United States, or a government that could become unfriendly to Australia, could put restrictions or bans on Australia. And the Australian economy could go belly up very quickly if, say, there are restrictions on trade with Australia or restrictions on its financial system. So I think, so far, the intelligence here in Australia has been very sophisticated in dealing with that. But it doesn't seem to be explicit. Australia is still trading with China. In fact, trade growth has increased. It's still trading with Asia, and it's still trading with Southeast Asia.

#Pascal

How much do you think these Australian networks of think tanks and universities and political associations and so on are still deeply entangled with the United States? Because when we look at Europe, one of the main ways in which they are connected to the US is actually through these elite networks and through things like the Munich Security Conference, Davos, and so on. You know, these are all big moments when the same group of people keeps mixing and mingling again. And they very clearly understand, you know, those outside—China, Russia, and so on—as the other.

Whereas we, the West, form a group, and we must then, you know, fill in the blank, like protect our values, da, da, da, da, da. How strong is that kind of feeling in Australia? Maybe, like, how many Australians were actually in the Epstein papers? I didn't follow that. Sorry, I missed that bit. The Epstein papers were very interesting to see who popped up. A lot of Europeans popped up, a lot of Israelis, and then some people in the Middle East, but very few Asians actually popped up in there. Were there some Australians as well? For me, it's a proxy to kind of think about how the integration is going at the moment.

#Alexis Esposto

I've not heard of the media reporting on particular figures popping up. There have been one or two whose names I don't recall. But going back to your question about where the Australian elites fit into

the picture—you know, universities and so on—I remember writing this original paper and sending it to a journal, and the response was, “There is no such thing as multipolarity.” Really? So, yes, there is still this mindset among the academic elites, and probably elements of the government still believe that. But I think the realisation is coming now, and the word “multipolarity” has crept into the media a number of times. So it's been a process. It's been a slow process. Remember that academics are funny people.

We are funny people in the sense that we want to keep our own ideas and say, “Oh, look how good I am. You know, I'm the first one to say this.” Or, “No, my idea was this, and I still want to keep it.” That still happens. But the reality is showing that Australia has to become far more sophisticated, you know, pragmatic, and diversify its foreign policy in order to be able to counteract these changes that are happening so fast, because you don't want to be left behind. And the problem is that, with the way technology is growing and the way AI, for example, cryptography, and payment systems are moving around the world, you could easily be left behind and become a third-world country.

This is a serious question that needs to be addressed, because if you don't address it now, it will come back to bite you on your bum very quickly. Not only will it give you a scar, but if you don't tackle it quickly, it can leave you with rabies, and you won't know what to do about it. And this is the challenge at the moment for the elites, for the people in government: to think about how we respond to these massive changes that are happening in Australia. Who are our allies? And it doesn't mean that you have to get into a fight with America or Trump or anybody else. It means that you have to follow your own national interest, in the interests of the people of Australia. And that's slowly happening, but not at the speed that I believe it should happen.

#Pascal

Is talk about the national interest actually popular among the political parties in Australia? Because in Japan, for instance, it is. Europe has largely stopped talking about it. In Europe, you now have politicians and national leaders, like Mr. Merz in Germany, who officially says, “I don't really care about the economy of Germany. The important thing is that we support Ukraine in the war against Russia.” They just stand there and say that. Several political leaders in Europe have said several times, “It's not very important what's happening to us. What's more important is the greater good of the world movement.” How far down the rabbit hole is Australia in this respect?

#Alexis Esposto

No, it's not gone to that extent. And again, I think it's because we're not in Europe. We're so far away from it that we haven't gone to that extent. There are voices, some in the media, who say, yes, we have to protect Western democracy to the fullest extent. It's the only system in the world that works. It's the only model to follow. Sure, there are good things about it, but there are things that need to be questioned, and we're not doing that at this stage. There are no clear voices like Merz in Australia that take us to that extreme of saying the only thing to worry about is Ukraine. The

good thing is that we've still been pragmatic in that sense, to a certain degree, but not as much as we should be. We're not getting into big fights. We do make silly decisions like, for example, signing up for the submarine fleet from the United States that costs $380 billion, which is the equivalent of...

#Alexis Esposto

Well, just to give you the context, the annual budget for universities in Australia is $40 billion. We're putting this much money into these nuclear submarines from the U.S., which are going to be delivered in 2050. Who knows if they will be delivered? And basically, a former prime minister, Paul Keating, said, you know, those eight submarines, if we went into a supposed conflict with China, would be like throwing toothpicks at a mountain. It just would not be healthy. And so he has been a very good voice against this idea of putting all your eggs in one basket, of saying, you know, the only way forward is the U.S. and the West. There are questions about that, but unfortunately, there's still this dependence and a lack of maturity as a nation to go there.

#Pascal

Yeah, and you know about the submarine deal. I had a very interesting discussion with Cameron Leckie, who told me that there's an even bigger irony in the whole thing because, yes, these submarines might be delivered in 15 or 20 years, somewhere down the road, for a lot of money, but U.S. nuclear submarines get access to Australian ports immediately. So basically, it's another way for the U.S. just to get basing rights, access rights.

#Alexis Esposto

That is actually the danger, because there are reports that these submarines are going to be fully controlled by the United States and not the Australian Navy. The minute America has full control of these submarines, it makes us a sitting duck for an attack. We've got Pine Gap, which is a major communications point in the centre of Australia. It supposedly provides communications for the entire U.S. Navy. These submarines, apart from being extraordinarily expensive, would basically make Australia a sitting duck for an attack.

What Paul Keating argues very clearly is, look, our strategy should be different. We should use conventional subs to protect the shores of Australia. Yeah, because to me, the idea that China is going to attack is just one of those stories to scare children. If it were to attack, you'd need an armada with millions of soldiers, right? You can't just come to Australia and attack it from wherever you want. The cost involved is astronomical, and China doesn't have to do that. We already trade with them. What would they take from us? I don't know. They already buy it at a very good price. Yeah, precisely.

#Pascal

It just doesn't make sense. It's an absolutely stupid discourse. But the bigger threat—and maybe you, as an economist, have something in mind there—is not just to the shorelines. You know, the stupid idea that the Chinese come with an armada and land on the beaches and then start marching. I mean, that's not the threat. The threat is actually to the sea lanes of communication, because Australia needs trade. If somebody interrupts the trading routes, which are all maritime, that's a problem, right? Even Australia's internal trade also goes through the sea lanes of communication around Australia. So where do you see the biggest vulnerability if somebody said, "Okay, we're going to do to Australia what the Americans are trying to do to Iran. We're going to completely blockade the entire continent"? Where is Australia's economic and strategic vulnerability?

#Alexis Esposto

Well, that would be a major vulnerability. Hypothetically, if we became enemies of America, our sea lanes could easily be blocked off, basically. So strategically, Australia is in a position where we are dependent on others. But it's a very complex matter, dealing with very large powers that can dictate what you do. And that's where the strength of good diplomacy, neutrality, and the ability to navigate these very troubled waters comes in. You're not seen to be taking sides, but you're actually managing the way in which you navigate those waters so that you're not damaging Australia's prosperity, which is really good. And we need to continue to be part of Asia.

We have a neighbour next to us, which is Indonesia. It's a major, major trading partner. We should continue to build on that and engage with Asia at every turn, because that's where the future is. Europe, unfortunately—and you probably know more than I do—is not growing. It's got serious problems with debt, an ageing population, migration issues, and so forth. What we need is a policy whereby we build on the links we've already established in the past and draw on the strength of our democratic institutions, but not to say, "Oh, look, we're so good with our democratic institutions that China should have democratic institutions like Australia does."

That's just not going to happen. It's not going to happen because China is a civilizational state of 5,000 years. We've only got 200 years of history. We just don't match it. What we should do is continue to trade with Asia, the United States, and Europe. But our strategic focus, I think, should be Asia because that's where the growth is. That's where we can continue with our exports of health and financial know-how. You know, we have a multicultural population that allows us to trade. You can come to Melbourne, and it looks like Singapore in certain parts of the place.

#Pascal

So it's a very successful model.

#Alexis Esposto

We are a very good model of that, and we have to continue to strengthen that because there are forces internally that are questioning it. And we've got what's known as the One Nation phenomenon that's coming up now. It's showing up in the elections, saying, "Oh, the problem for Australia is immigration." Well, let me tell you, if Australia didn't have immigration, we would not have anyone looking after our grandparents in homes anymore, working in restaurants, or creating businesses like the one I work for, which is actually owned by an Indian and employs 80 to 100 people. So that's the great contribution that migration has made to Australia. That cannot be questioned.

#Pascal

Yeah, and actually, you know, Australia also has something special going for it, which is that it's very attractive. I have a young Chinese friend who just moved there and, under the working visa arrangement, is now able to work for about two years in Australia. And those are the kinds of people, you know, who are disgruntled with the economy or the system in China. They're the ones who then go to Australia because they want that, right? So you basically get the best of both worlds. You get people who would like to integrate and have that kind of environment, and then they will be the link back to China as well. So there's so much potential there. The potential is there.

#Alexis Esposto

It's still there. It hasn't been ignored by the elites, which is good because now there's money to be made. They know that there is potential and there is still growth. But you have these crazy forces, these extremist forces that come in and blame somebody because we've got issues related to housing, where housing is too expensive and the next generation can't buy it. Those are real issues. And so the blame is, "Oh, it's the migrants that cause this. There's not enough housing because there are too many migrants. There are too many students." Well, that's not the reality of it. So these are the challenges. What threatens us in Australia, in a way, are indirect forces like a Chinese-American clash, and we're asked to take sides. The problem is, sometimes when you're a little guy, you are forced in the playground to take sides. And the only way you can avoid taking sides is by running away from the mess. And, yeah, that's the $68,000 question that Australia faces at this stage.

#Pascal

I know that Indonesia, as well, at a fairly high level of its diplomacy, is actually thinking this through. What if there is a US-China clash and Australia is forced to pick the side of the United States? And actually, you know, missiles start flying between China and Australia. The Indonesians are saying, “Well, these missiles will fly over our territory. What the hell are we going to do then?” So everybody is currently very, very anxious about such a scenario. Do you have a gut feeling for the Australian political scene? If it came to an exchange between the US and China—let's say, in my view, the most likely place is actually not Taiwan but the Philippines, for some form of clash that would have the

flavor of, you know, what's happening in Ukraine—would the political establishment in the different parties automatically start siding with the US, or would there be a kind of "Wait, wait a second" moment?

#Alexis Esposto

My gut feeling, based on historical experience, is that it will probably side with the United States. But I don't know. And this is where the quandary is. This is where the debate has to happen. I don't know whether, when push comes to shove, we'd go all the way, because the risks are too high—existential. I hope not. That's because I tend to err on the side of caution. I hope that the leaders of Australia still have that clear thinking. And there are voices there who basically say, "No, we need to be independent. We need to be neutral in this." Historically, those voices have not been strong enough. In World War I, there was a strong movement against getting involved in the war, but we did get involved, and we lost a lot of young people there.

It was the same with World War II, but that was a different scenario. We normally side with the US. I hope—and I don't think that scenario will happen again—because the possibility of the US losing will be far greater than in Iran, for example. If the US cannot beat Iran now, as we speak, I don't think it will have a chance with China, because it would be going into territory with a far more sophisticated army and defense system. Look, I hope we don't go there. I hope we don't go there.

I don't have enough information to give you a specific answer, but my gut feeling is that it won't. What could happen is that there may be pressure on Australia, and this is why I say in the paper that we should consider membership in BRICS. Whether BRICS wants to have us is another story. But the thing is, if you have payment systems other than SWIFT, what do you do if, say, all of a sudden we have a government in Australia that says, "No, we don't want to have a bar of that. We want to be independent"? Then they can cut us off from SWIFT. So what's our alternative? What's Plan B? Have we got access to a payment system with China? Can we sell our iron ore to China in renminbi?

But just going back to that, there are already mining companies selling iron ore to China with payments in renminbi, so in Chinese yuan. So it's not as if there aren't forces already working there. Are they geopolitical or ideological? They're not. They're more pragmatic in a business sense because it's convenient to do that. It's a smart thing to do. You can't get into a fight with China. It's like getting into a fight with your grandfather who happens to be a multibillionaire, and he's about to leave you his entire fortune, you know? Only a crazy person could do that. No, no. Sorry. There are crazy people in positions of power.

#Pascal

There are. The question is whether, structurally, Australia is in a position where it can develop that. In a sense, you don't even need a national policy for diversification. All you need is the absence of a

national policy that keeps that from happening, because the business sector will automatically develop diversified strategies in order to keep trading. They're working on that. But the EU is a very, very negative example of how this kind of US alliance thinking makes them create regulations that are actually very harmful to diversification of energy, for instance. Diversification of the energy mix is now officially, basically, being blocked because of ideological allegiances. And I do hope that Australia is not that far down that road. No, I don't think we are.

#Alexis Esposto

Fortunately, we are not, because we tend to be good buddies with Singapore, with Southeast Asia, with Indonesia, still with China, still with India. We haven't broken that up. There are certain currents that do push that. But at the end of the day, it's too dangerous to go that far in that direction. And the Australian spirit is not so silly as to go all the way. This is my hunch. I stand to be corrected, because I'm probably speaking more from an emotional standpoint here, because I don't want it to happen. But there has to come a realization, and a question: given the events in Iran and in the GCC countries, will America have the material resources and military power to defend Australia if it faces an imminent attack by a foreign country? Will America come and save us? Well, the evidence shows that they're not helping the Saudis. They're not helping the Gulf countries.

#Pascal

They can.

#Alexis Esposto

Australia. Yeah, it's too far away. They don't have the shipping or the supply chains, in the military sense, to be able to do that. So putting all those eggs into that basket is, I think, a bit over the top.

#Pascal

Yeah, I think so too. The question, of course, is whether or not that kind of perception is shared among the political and business elites within Australia and among the general population, because you need a certain amount of buy-in. But Alexis, this was very interesting, and I'm glad to hear that in Australia things, at least in your perception, seem to be a little bit more pragmatic. People who want to follow you and your work, where should they go? And I'm just going to show your paper again here. It's actually open access, so anyone who Googles it will find it. I will also link it in the description box below. Is there any other place where people can follow your work? Well, I do sometimes write on Substack. I've written a number of papers there.

#Alexis Esposto

I'm not very prolific because I've got a very busy job at the moment. I'm the dean of the faculty, so I've got to run around a lot. But I do try and write. I write for an Argentine magazine. I didn't get a chance to write for the last two months because I had to work in China for a month. I teach in China. I go there often, which I really like. So I've stopped writing for now, but I've got a couple of papers in mind at the moment. One is an economics paper, which I'm in the process of working on. I like to write academic papers and then get offshoots from those papers. And also, you know, I want to be part of this community that's discussing these very complex issues together, because we're all in it, whether we like it or not.

#Pascal

Yeah, we're in it together. I'm working on an initiative called the Multipolar Peace Network. It's not quite ready yet, but as soon as it is, we will reach out and include you and many others so that we can have this global discussion and actually set a course for a proper, multipolar, peaceful world. And I will also link your Substack profile in the description box below. Alexis Esposto, thank you so much for your time today.

#Alexis Esposto

Thank you so much, Pascal. It's been a pleasure.