

AUSTRALIAN INTERNATIONAL RESEARCH INSTITUTE

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The Chairperson
Standing Committee on State Development
Legislative Council NSW Parliament
Sydney

4 December 2003



Dear Sir/Madam

Re: Port Infrastructure in NSW

The proposal was brought for discussion to replacing Sydney's container terminals with unit blocks or public open space. I offer the following comments to Point of Reference No 1:

London, Rotterdam, Naples and New York are only a few examples of big cities with a strong maritime/industrial component. What's wrong with container vessels to continue loading/unloading their cargo at Sydney's terminals? There should be built multistory facilities to that end.

It was misleading to pinpoint those general cargo ships as a potential threat to marine environment. Rather it is oil tankers and foreshore refineries that should be relocated to Newcastle or Port Kembla, bearing in mind the worldwide poor record of this category of merchant fleet in marine pollution statistics. A conceivable, single terrorist attack could bring spectacular and irreparable consequences to the country's largest metropolis. No nuclear wastes should be allowed on Sydney's waters.

Sydney's ratio of the Navy component is much higher than it would be considered safe overseas. The 'Platypus' already made an unwelcome impact on the residential neighbourhood in North Sydney. The nation's ongoing involvement in global politics might suggest providing a more 'trigger-free' environment to almost a quarter of Australia's total population.

Joseph Conrad (Józef Korzeniowski), the Polish-born English novelist, in the book Mirror of the Sea (1906) described Sydney Harbour as "one of the finest, most beautiful, vast, and safe bays the sun had ever shone upon". Many would probably agree that aesthetic qualities of this maritime icon are likely to reverberate in hearts and minds of all those who feel accustomed to what Sydney means to them as it is at the present.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Waldemar Niemoćko".

Waldemar Niemoćko
President