

It is a deep commitment to peace that guides the NSW Teachers Federation's opposition to militarism and belief that war should never be used to resolve international conflict. There have been too many times in history when warmongering and armaments build-up have led to international conflict, death and destruction.

Federation opposes AUKUS and joins the growing chorus of concern that the AUKUS security pact Australia signed with the USA and the UK compromises the pursuit of an independent foreign policy and has the potential to drag Australia once again into foreign conflict and war.

Recent alarmist, war mongering commentary, deployed in an attempt to bolster unsubstantiated predictions of an inevitable war with China, is of deep concern.

Within weeks it was announced that the Australian Government is to spend \$368 billion on nuclear-powered submarines, which will increase the hosting of US military forces on Australian territory. Continuing reports that Port Kembla is being considered as the site for a nuclear submarine base is of deep concern for our public education communities.

While governments appear ever ready to commit huge amounts of public revenue on military expenditure there remains a serious underfunding of public pre-schools, public schools, TAFE and higher education, and other areas of the public sector. A massive transference of public wealth to private armament manufacturers will constrain public expenditure in all government portfolios for decades to come.

We are reminded of the words of former Federation President Sam Lewis when addressing the union's 1951 Annual Conference:

"The greatest single factor on the world scale causing inflation and leading to the undermining of the living and cultural standards of the people is enormous expenditure on production of armaments. Teachers are concerned very deeply with conservation: conservation of natural resources, conservation of human resources. They are the agents in the battle against material and moral erosion, against the scorching of human flesh and the searing of the human spirit."

It was also Sam Lewis who ensured the belief that "all wars are fought against children" underpins our work as teachers.

Federation will continue to work with the anti-war, peace and broader union movement to expose and oppose the threat inherent in this rise in militarism.

A further detailed report and recommendation on peace will be presented to Annual Conference.