

## In Response to Nick Xenophon's Article

<http://www.smh.com.au/comment/failure-to-deal-fairly-with-east-timor-opening-the-door-to-china-20150802-gipnjp.html>

Dear Editor,

It is incomprehensible to me why Australian governments continue to treat Timor-Leste as Nick Xenophon so well describes ("Timor stance paves the way for China", August 2). It must also be mysterious to the thousands of Australians who work hard and donate generously for health and education programs in Timor. The people continue to do what successive governments have failed to do.

It is those thousands of Australians who can't stomach the fact that there is still no recognition of the 40,000 Timorese lives lost in World War II because of Timorese support of the 700 Australian soldiers there, or that the official position on Timor's later problems is that Australia saved the day. The real history is one of forgetfulness, complicity and denial. The good done by so many Australians, including the military, has been overshadowed by official deceit, painted as some grotesque 'national interest'.

All the current talk of 'border protection' is hilarious when Australia is refusing to decide on one with a neighbour. We need to take the thumb out of our collective mouth and get on with it. Draw the line.