

Comment by Michael C H Jones

The question of whether or not to bomb Iran's alleged nuclear facilities raises so many ancillary issues.

The morality and legality of pre-emptive air strikes and state-sanctioned assassinations.
The accuracy of the information disseminated to electors justifying such actions.
The rights of minorities to object and the forms of protests permitted by authorities.
The historical context in which the issues are argued and particularly the prevailing paradigms.

Essentially in my view the core principles revolve around the concepts of exclusiveness and fundamentalism. This is relatively obvious in West Asia. But not so obvious in East Asia.

The current institutional authorities in Israel are adamant that it is an exclusive Jewish State and that it is based on 3/4 thousand years of history for the entire 'Holy Land' or Greater Israel including 'Palestine'. Israel is an island in a sea of Muslim fundamentalism of competing sects. The protection of the state and the Jewish survival linked with that state is non-negotiable. The religious brethren particularly in the USA and Western countries where conservative leaders are still guilt ridden over the Holocaust - the 6 million Jews rather than the total of up to 17 million according to google - make Israel a global litmus test issue.

In East Asia the challenge of Taiwan's heritage and status is not religious but equally a question of exclusiveness - it is a province of China, and fundamentalist in the sense of China's state sovereignty. No event anywhere in the world or at any level of society that may infer Taiwan's 'independence' is left unchallenged by Beijing - Chinese Taipei is the correct designation and there is no argument permitted by the PRC. If push comes to shove the PLA will launch a pre-emptive strike with a million or more troops that will be supported by an attempted quarantining of the surrounding China Seas including the US military installations in Guam.

Where then are voters who disagree? Disagree in any aspect.

Bottom line, if Australia fights again with the USA supporting Israel's attack on Iran - and obviously Iran's response, or the repulse of PRC forces on and around Taiwan - and China's counter-attack elsewhere, what acts of opposition in this country would be designated as 'treasonous'? Despite the Sunni-Shia divide there will be a significant emotional and financial support for Iran. The solidarity with China throughout the Chinese community in Australia will be enormous irrespective of the rights and wrongs. Conscription for the armed forces to facilitate interventions Vietnam style would be impossible, and there would simply be too many resisters to jail.

Gillard and Rudd, Abbott and Bishop, should think carefully about their advice to President Obama when he addresses the Australian Parliament on the 17th November. The days of creative stories about Tonkin Incidents and Weapons of Mass Destruction are over. Just tell him to give the world the truth WikiLeaks style.