Comment by Michael C H Jones

Perhaps I am the only one decidedly uneasy. I hope for Australia's sake I am wrong.

Carr is a totally different personality to Kevin Rudd - for one thing he is likeable. His personal spin was always cloaked and more obtuse - better the photograph with a copy of Foreign Affairs Magazine than one with Kissinger, although that no doubt is in the pipeline. However the making of the occasional pithy foreign affairs observation in Sydney as Premier of NSW is somewhat different to the lights of New York and the United Nations or the East Asia Summit meetings in Asia, stages which Rudd mastered with his former standing as PM. From reading his Thoughtlines blog it is very obvious Carr quickly needs another Bruce Hawker and a top class speech writer such as Graham Freudenberg. It is a different class of spin at the global level.

Also the way in which he has been elevated to the position of Foreign Minister. Not the media mess Gillard made of it - Carr must have smiled a thousand times. But the traditional NSW ALP "fix". Anyone who believes the story formated by Gillard and Carr and the reasons given for the resignation of Mark Arbib is a personification of political naivety.

There is a desperate rescue operation being mounted to save the "joys" of office and the structure that enables it, the Labor Party. The historic trade union connection may have to be jettisoned. Barry O'Farrell with his new funding laws in NSW is an integral part of this theatrical. Carr carries the weight of the reform of the ALP on his shoulders - it has to meet the challenges of the new global order in the context of the rise of China and India and the evolving norms of the global institutions such as the G20. All the structures are changing, especially their leadership, whether the older World Bank, IMF and ILO or the younger APEC/TPP, ICC and even the CHOGM. Is Carr equipped mentally and emotionally at 64 years to respond in Australia's interests and not those of others. Then again would Julie Bishop from the Opposition be better prepared.

In this context one of the issues that has always concerned me is the quality of Australian journalists - they don't even seem to have read the international publications freely available on the internet. And I do not mean just the Wall Street Journal or the New York Times, but the range of Think Tank publications throughout Asia, Africa and Latin America, many of which links Chamber has placed on this website over the last decade. Without this well grounded understanding of what is happening, how can Australian journalists ask the searching questions required or report accurately about what is relevant for Australians. Will Carr get away with his NSW spin in Canberra - he certainly will not in Beijing.

I am decidedly worried.