

Comment by Michael C H Jones

Congratulations Bob Carr for being a courageous Australian Foreign Minister. Following in the footsteps of his gallant leader, Prime Minister Julia Gillard who severely admonished the EU for their dilly-dallying over financial reform, Carr has now called a spade a bloody shovel in the best traditions of the Australian Labor Party. Obama 'you are on the precipice and your next budget is make or break not only for the US but for the world' is effectively what Carr has told the Americans via Presidential hopeful Mitt Romney - 'you can quote me' he is reported as saying.

Now these few words say so much about the new Australia, the global Great Power of the second rank behind the USA and PRC. As Rudd said of China, Carr says of America "we are good friends" and sometimes friends have to tell the truth no matter how hurtful - 'you have been in decline America and you have to get your act together for the sake of liberty around the world', Democracy and Human Rights in capital letters depends on it. Those dastardly Chinese are "rising" or "returning", take you pick, and they are asserting themselves everywhere simultaneously using their gigantic population resources in a totally ungentlemanly way - pardon me ladies. But Bob after Briefing former US Secretaries of State Kissinger and Rice, please note both Republicans, on the 'Australian Way' felt obliged to give Romney some friendly - that word again - advice from an old professional "head-kicker" from Down Under - Rudd may have told Bush that compared to Queensland Texas was "two spits and you missed it" in terms of size but Bob was the boss for a decade of the financial and intellectual capital of the South Western Pacific, Sydney, where the Greatest Games of all were held compared to which Romney and the Salt Lake City Olympics were a organisational and financial US\$1.3 billion nightmare. There was never any tax payer pork-barrelling in New South Wales, that all came after Carr retired as Premier.

<http://www.democraticunderground.com/10021002939>

Even more important Carr has extended the concept recently accepted by the United Nations of the 'Responsibility to Protect', even though like me he sometimes strengthens the principle by saying the 'Obligation to Protect', in that not only do nations have obligations but so do Foreign Ministers and NGO - "friends" - to make their views known to American, Chinese and other candidates during their national elections. Former PRC Premier Zhao Ziyang in 'Prisoner of the State' talked about the Peoples 'Right to Know', and Julian Assange in his WikiLeaks made the idea a reality. Now Bob Carr is one step short of pronouncing the new paradigm of international relations, what the ACCCI has been advocating for a number of years namely the 'Right to Interfere'. The well-being of the world depends on decisions made in Wall Street, witness the GFC, or the actions of British Bankers re Libor - \$350 trillion in derivatives - "because Libor is used in U.S. derivatives markets, an attempt to manipulate Libor is an attempt to manipulate U.S. derivatives markets, and thus a violation of American law".

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Libor\\_scandal](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Libor_scandal)

The Peoples of the world, including Australians, therefore have the right of participation in the decisions to enforce the laws which impact their lives. Congratulations Bob Carr for taking the lead and speaking strongly on our behalf.

Now I hear your retort, especially from the traditionalists amongst you. It is not the done thing for a visiting Foreign Minister to comment on the internal affairs of the host country, and very unwise to do so in the USA. Rudd did it in China on the question of Human Rights and look what happened to him. And Tony Abbott and his pet poodle Christopher Pyne are not likely to leave the issue alone. You can bet there will be much comment and clarifications 'every which way you can' - thank you Clint.

However Bob is a man of letters, dare I say an intellectual, and 'can' more than handle the heat, just read his maiden speech in the Australian Federal Parliament.

<http://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/search/display/display.w3p;query=Id%3A%22chamber%2Fhansards%2F34dcc858-84ef-4fe3-9144-f6f97af26110%2F0180%22>

He covers the range of historical personalities, past and present, high and low station, subjects of consequence and otherwise. Former PM Ben Chifley, ALP Senator John Wheeldon, writer Norman Mailer, NSW Premier John Fahey, Senator Penny Wong, former PM and NSW Premier George Reid, Dr H V Evatt, NSW Premier William Holman, Henry Kissinger, Bill Clinton, Bill McKibben, Peter Beattie, Samuel Huntington, King Abdullah of Jordan, caliph Abd-al-Rahman III, Jewish scholar Hasdai ibn Shaprut, Maria Rosa Menocal, Sydney businessman John Azarias, Greek Alexandrian poet Constantine Cavafy, all get a mention - I may have missed a few?.

He intones rather as an aside "I subscribe to the view that Australia is a creative middle power and an activist middle power that defends its interests—which is, after all, the essence of foreign policy". He goes on to talk about Free Trade, Climate Change and a carbon trading scheme, and a multitude of other subjects and then ends with the assertion:

"Running foreign policy is about protecting our national interest, although by every tenet of diplomatic doctrine that comes first and foremost. It is also about being an exemplary global citizen when it comes to protecting human rights and protecting the world's oceans. To this I would like to add that in foreign policy we may also promote and defend cultural diversity, the idea of a planet of seven billion that celebrates and does not deny its contradictions". Bob Carr understands the Right to Interfere in a global society.

He also appreciates the ACCCI concept of Indauspac and our emphasis on the oceans and maritime economic community of our region. To me , apart from his statement on cultural diversity, Carr's most important commitment is in his strong statement:

"And what about the oceans? Their chemical composition is changing as they absorb more and more of the carbon that our civilisations have been emitting. According to one measurement, the Southern Ocean, which lies between us and the environment of Antarctica, absorbs about 40 per cent of all the human-driven carbon dioxide released around the world each year. The chemical composition of the oceans is changing—a process known as ocean acidification. Currently about one-quarter of the carbon dioxide released each year by human activities is absorbed by those oceans. As the concentration of carbon dioxide increases, the water becomes more acidic. Its chemical composition changes as that of the atmosphere has been changed, and so many disastrous implications follow. Among other things, there is a change in the exoskeletons of marine animals. They become brittle and frail, introduced to a sort of osteoporosis.

Then there is what is happening to the earth's coral. I spoke a moment ago with a group of ambassadors from all around the world, UN ambassadors brought to Australia to discuss with us our bid for the United Nations Security Council. It was the UN ambassador from Serbia who said that, as a diver—Serbia is now a landlocked country, but the ambassador used to represent Yugoslavia—he cannot find a coral reef that is intact from chemical change. When I told him I was going to give a speech and refer to ocean acidification, he understood implicitly the change that is going on.

We are an island state with the third-largest marine jurisdiction in the world. My parliamentary colleague Senator Feeney tells me that, with our landmass and that of the South Pacific, we occupy 20 per cent of the earth's surface. We have a great issue here. With our partners, the small island states of the South Pacific, there is a lot involved in it. I understand that those small island states are eager to have us make a commitment to the blue economy".

Australia has a Responsibility, indeed an Obligation, to interfere.