

Comment by Michael C H Jones

It has been well known for over 20 years since Tiananmen Square and the political-social eruptions across about three hundred cities in China during 1989, and certainly since the handover of Hong Kong from Britain to China in 1997, that migrants to Australia taking citizenship were still considered Chinese rather than Australian and treated accordingly by the PRC. Indeed ethnic Chinese from any part of the world have been treated differently since 1949 for better or worse. Chamber has always followed a dual strategy wherein the benefits of Caucasian and Chinese ethnicity have been pursued in accordance with commercial project possibilities. The jailing of Australian citizens born in China have been challenged by ACCCI for other reasons namely the uncertainty it has brought to our trade and business relations concerning the interface between legal, government and party authorities. It is just one of the reasons for Chamber's interest in the WCEC - World Chinese Entrepreneurial Convention.

This PRC political viewpoint has been inadvertently highlighted by the SMH in relation to the meetings Australian Foreign Minister Bob Carr had in Beijing - "three meetings .... yesterday with officials of the Chinese foreign ministry, the military and the Communist Party's international department" - of which the last was the most important. It mirrors the structure of Chinese governance and the positions held by China's retiring leader Hu Jintao - in order of power General Secretary of the Communist Party of China (CPC), Chairman of the Central Military Commission, and President of the People's Republic. This should and would be clearly understood by those reading the ACCCI Monitors on China's Political System, Legal System and Foreign Policy.

In addition it helps explain the structure and authorities of Chamber and in particular the evolving roles played by foundation President Darcy Carter and his successor Reg Torrington from 1976 and myself since 1989. The Presidency has been essentially a diplomatic representative role initially in Australasia and China and over the last decade in the USA, EU and ASEAN. Chairman of the ACCCI Board/Life Governors is the leadership policy arm and CEO of ACCCI Pty Limited controls the activist responsibilities of Special Projects including finance. In the era of Global Economic Relations ACCCI Pty Limited is the Chambers "military arm". In our own way and with Australian characteristics Chamber has always sought to parallel Chinese governance and thus avoid the short-term, insular and naive tunnel vision so common in political and business circles in this country.

Having successfully transformed from the Chamber's historic role, officially ended in January 2009, to a Think Tank with activist commitments, ACCCI's increasingly focus is on questions of Governance in a Global Society as impacted by the return of China to international leadership in a world economically dominated since 1945 by the USA. All levels of governance - city/local, provincial/state, central/federal, spheres/regional, international/global - increasingly interface beyond traditional borders and are simply overwhelming older concepts of State Sovereignty. Chamber has the objective to play some role in the areas of Democracy, Human Rights, Global Economic Relations and Property Relations - all of which concepts are themes commented upon in this website over recent years since at least 2006.