

Comment by Michael C H Jones

As stated in my Observations writings Australia has already become a Great Power. Membership of the G20 confirmed it, and despite the vitriol of the Murdoch Mob of up to 30 journalists - often a tag-team of six per day - against Kevin Rudd, as formerly Prime Minister and currently Foreign Minister he can take a lot of credit for articulating this situation whether in the USA with Obama and Clinton or in the EU, or through his former Ministers Smith and Crean around the Indauspac Maritime Economic Community - their speeches have been regularly placed on the ACCCI Website Homepage and elsewhere since early 2008.

Economically Australia is the power-house of resources in Indauspac. Which countries will be more dependent in future decades - Australia-China, Australia-India, Australia-ASEAN only history will determine. Politically Australia's institutions are strong, and getting stronger. Many of the ideas and policies of the Greens Party, now in coalition with the Australian Labor Party as the Federal Government of Australia, will become accepted thinking in the very near future. Perhaps only Malcolm Turnbull in the Federal Opposition has the intellectual capacity to understand and turn to advantage these trends. A Conservative Government would have no choice as is shown by events in the UK.

But the litmus test of a society is how it adheres to its own values and traditions. In this respect the former Howard Government will be universally condemned. The Pacific Solution, the AWB Affair and the David Hicks Case were a debasement of every democratic, rule of law, human rights aspiration of the Australian people. Murdoch does not have sufficient money to wipe away or airbrush the stains on the body-politic of this country. Australia is not the USA and China knows it.

David Hick should have had his day in court - former President George Bush and Prime Minister John Howard should also be in the dock. How do we stand against the Communist Party of China representing a political system which Australia finds abhorrent, or the religious fundamentalists of Iran, Israel, India and the USA if we deny the rights of one man, be he David Hicks or anyone else? David Hicks deserves a full and unconditional apology from both the Obama and Gillard Governments. Decent and honorable people all over Australia want to hear the words "We are sorry" - sorry not only for the way David Hicks was mistreated but sorry for the betrayal of the Australian tradition of "Fair Go".