

Comment by Michael C H Jones

1st September 2014

Where to start except to say that at least someone in America has some sense and more importantly persistence. It hasn't happened so far in Australia and these contrary views on the significance of Ukraine are unlikely to get a run in the mainly Murdoch controlled/influenced media - even the slightly right of center ABC has been "All the way with Tony A" in his crusade for the Anglo-Saxon world leadership on this and other global issues- head and shoulders above both US Obama and UK Cameron. If he were to fall over, Julie Bishop is available to ride the chariot.

Over the last decade I have visited Europe at least 6/7 times and advocated one of the ACCI Peoples' Diplomacy Special Projects, namely a Common Economic Relations (CER) Agreement between Russia and the EU. Some very favourable responses in Germany, lukewarm in France, Italy and Spain and fear in Eastern Europe especially Poland which just wants to host US missiles. Nevertheless there was and is an understanding that eventually, maybe 25/50 years, Europe has to be for Europeans and the American legions have to go home. Ukraine was the litmus test in this possibility, indeed the beginning of a possible global realignment.

Now as Mearsheimer points out all is ashes because of US intransigence concerning the expansion of the EU and particularly NATO to the Russian border. Great Powers require their spheres of influence - Diplomacy 101 as Mearsheimer sarcastically states. The US Monroe Doctrine of 1823 was the Magna Carta of Great Power Foreign Policy - it applied to both Imperial Russia and manifest destiny America as they both expanded their territories East and West during the 18th and 19th centuries. It applied to China in Central Asia, South East Asia and the China Seas. The European Powers used their navies and gun-boat diplomacy to carve up great slabs of Latin America, Africa and Asia, not to mention the Indian and Pacific Ocean islands. Every school boy knows these facts, except certain sections of the Right Wing American power structure.

Who are these groups? I suggest broadly speaking three.

First the fundamentalist Christians and Jews with their paranoid attachment to the Jewish State of Israel. Why not a secular multicultural state? Anything can be justified in the name of the Holocaust - that is the unforgivable deaths of up to six million Jews, but what about about the other over five million Gypsies, Poles, communists, homosexuals, the mentally and physically disabled, and other ethnic and political minorities -

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Holocaust. The slaughter by remote bombing of over 2000 women and children, wounding of 11,000 others and destruction of the homes of 20% of the Gaza population - up to 400,000 people, can be rationalised by the deaths of less than 70 Israelis - was it really the interference with business as usual that provoked such a brutal onslaught? Beware of gods and their books.

Second the Neo-cons with their ideas of American Exceptionalism and manifest destiny to bring "freedom" and Free Enterprise to the world in every dog-fight anywhere - the US hammer must belt all the nails relentlessly. Keep the troops in Iraq and Afghanistan, bomb Iran, boots on the ground in Syria and Ukraine, bottle up China in its coastal ports, launch 1973 Chile-style coups whenever necessary. Rendition, torture, drones, sanctions are all necessary for the Pax Americana. In the name of anti-terrorism throw out freedom of information and speech as unhelpful in the "grand plan" for America's world order.

Third the great American multi-national corporations, including their intra-state feeder SME, which increasingly due to their size and global spread are no longer truly "nationalistic" but have a proven track record in making huge profits from wars - over 150 years since the US Civil War. The 20 year-olds do the fighting and suffering, the foreign domestic women and children are the collateral damage and homeless, but it is business as usual in the Anglosphere. The calculations are being made already - Russia/Ukraine, Russia-EU/NATO, Russia/USA, USA/Russia-China?

The mission of a sensible, smart, dexterous Left Diplomacy is to either to neutralise these groups or to keep them apart. Unfortunately there appears to be a perfect storm brewing with the rise of the 'Coalition of the Mad'. One had hoped that the religious wars of Christianity were long past excluding Ireland. But now like the Sunni and Shia in West Asia we have the Catholics and Orthodox in Eastern Europe. The opportunity for a genuine multicultural Ukraine as a Eurasian bridge, or bulwark to China in Central Asia, is gone. The hope that Russia would swing to the EU and its historical traditions is dashed with a desperate economic pivot to China in the face of mounting Western economic sanctions. Culturally Russia will be consumed in East, North and Central Asia by China - just analyse the disbursement of their respective populations. What then for our American Right Wing groups up against a cultural-economic empire based on more than 20% of the world's population aspiring to living standards equal to the Western middle class? It is definitely not going to be a "Win Win" outcome.

Save us in Australia from our American friends.

Comment by Michael C H Jones
2nd September 2014

Yesterday evening I made comment on John Mearsheimer's article in September/October Foreign Affairs. Now I wish to develop additional ideas from the same article.

Specifically the proposal re "making Ukraine a 'neutral buffer' between Russia and NATO instead of westernizing it" and "switch gears and work to create a prosperous but neutral Ukraine, one that does not threaten Russia and allows the West to repair its relations with Moscow"

Both eminently sensible and realistic ideas. Russia is essentially European but with profound cultural/religious differences with the Catholic and Protestant nations to its West. Ukraine as I have already stated could have become, perhaps it is not too late, a multicultural secular buffer state bordering Eurasia.

Irrespective of how it works out in the Ukraine Crisis, an intensified war of various descriptions seems inevitable - especially if NATO fields "rapid response" forces - the concept and/or principles of the also inevitable peace settlement after the bloodshed is equally applicable to that other divided country bordering a nation returning to Great Power status, namely North and South Korea and the PRC. American troops can not stay in South Korea forever? China can not economically bolster North Korea forever? There has to be a diplomatic arrangement that underwrites China's sphere of influence around its borders - just like Russia in the Ukraine or dare we say the USA with Canada and Mexico? A United neutral Korea as a buffer state between Japan and China would be a good result. But sorry America, as with Europe, the legions will have to leave East Asia. ASEAN, particularly future Indonesia, India, and yes Australia, will have to balance China-Japan rivalries throughout the Region.