

Interview by email of Michael C H Jones, President of ACCCI, by Mr David James from BRW (Business Review Weekly - Fairfax) on Monday 5th July 2010

David James:

Dear Mr Jones I am looking for examples of Australian Chinese developing businesses in China, taking advantage of the diaspora. From what you suggest maybe the diaspora is a bit of an illusion, but that is my purpose anyway.

Michael Jones:

As I rather cynically said on the phone most successful Australian Chinese business people in China migrated here in a) post 1989 re Mandarin speakers or b) pre 1989 Cantonese speakers. Australian born Chinese who do not speak/read either language find it very difficult even to survive in China given the nationalism/racism that exists among themselves (hidden from Westerners).

The Australian education system attracts hundreds of thousands of Chinese students and has produced some of the world's brightest minds many of whom have gone on to be successful entrepreneurs. Just one example is Dr. Zhengrong Shi, Founder and Chairman of Suntec Power (established in 2001) that currently has offices in 13 countries with over 12,000 employees. But these people do not live in Australia although they own homes and have property investments here. How you find them in China is anyone's guess.

David James:

Mr Jones, can I quote you (as a spokesman for the ACCCI) about how hard it is for Australian Chinese to thrive in China?

Michael Jones:

I had already replied to your previous email.

Most business people will not go near the media either in China or Australia - the CPC runs it in China and Murdoch just about in Australia - who knows which one is better at disinformation?

China is the most competitive market in the world - it is just that under the socialist market system all roads lead to the CPC. The USA/Australia markets are not competitive and that is just how the corporates/unions both the Liberal and Labor parties want to keep it. Except for digging holes, and a few niche related resources (mining and agricultural) sectors Australian SMEs are just not good enough - lots of individual success stories but as a percentage very low. But Austrade and the various State Business Departments provide employment in Australia which is very beneficial for politicians. My cynicism, again.

You are most welcome to quote me but please get the context and sense right. And if you do quote me please email a copy of the article.

If you did take the time to visit the ACCCI Website at least read Observations 5 in the left-hand tab - you are unlikely to read these thoughts in the Australian media although they are commonplace internationally. If you want to understand why I am particularly cynical this morning just read Carr and Richardson in today's Australian.

David James:

Michael this is what I want to use (I am not allowed to send you the whole article). I took it straight from your email. What is your title, btw?

"Mainland China's approach to the Chinese diaspora is more deliberate than India's; it is part of the Communist Party's official position to develop it. But the links may be overstated. According to Michael Jones of the Australian China Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Australian born Chinese often fare poorly in mainland China.

"Most successful Australian Chinese business people in China migrated here, and are post 1989 Mandarin speakers or pre 1989 Cantonese speakers. Australian born Chinese who do not speak or read either language find it very difficult even to survive in China given the 'domestic ethnic nationalism'. But the Australian education system attracts hundreds of thousands of Chinese students and has produced some of the world's brightest minds many of whom have gone on to be successful entrepreneurs. "

Michael Jones:

David for some unknown reason I am enjoying this exchange - takes me away from real work.

Fairfax distorts and Murdoch is "ALWAYS better at disinformation" - may I quote you? Very courageous, Minister - my favourite saying recently.

Yes you can quote me for your paragraph below as altered to "domestic ethnic nationalism" re Michael C H Jones, President - ACCCI.

Remember the Chinese Political Consul who defected from the Chinese Consulate in Sydney a number of years ago - he said there were "over 5000 spies" in Australia - what he meant was 5000 members of the CPC. Australia has already become a battleground between the USA and the PRC - but at this stage you are not allowed to report that event.

David James:

Absolutely you can quote me.