

OBSERVATIONS 8

THE AGE OF TONY ABBOTT - WILL THERE BE A CULTURAL REVOLUTION FOR AUSTRALIA !

As we celebrate the 120th birthday of the Great Helmsman of China, Comrade Mao Zedong, we think of recently departed leaders with global impact such as South Africa's Nelson Mandela. It is doubtful that US Barack Obama, German Angela Merkel, Russian Vladimir Putin, Indonesian Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono (SBY) have had the same impact despite their better political positioning and resources from the start. Who is mostly responsible for China's return/rise since the death of Mao on 9th September 1976? Deng Xiaoping gets the credit but you are only as good as the men around you. What kudos is deserved by Hu Yaobang, Zhao Ziyang, Li Peng, Jiang Zemin, Zhu Rongji, Hu Jintao, Wen Jiabao and the collective leadership of the many Politburo Standing Committees of the Chinese Communist Party over 35 years?

I appear to have generated a great deal of discussion and controversy with my recent Comments on Tony Abbott and his Anglosphere philosophy for Australia's projection of influence throughout Asia, however defined. However he also will be only as successful as the capabilities of the men and woman around him. John Howard looked very worried during the recent Australian federal election campaign - he was a big 'C' Conservative, a genuine break with the Menzies small 'I' liberal philosophy of his Party but never a dogmatist. Abbott is a very new theological/ideological beast in Australian politics. Everything as we know it is to be redefined and the blasphemers put back in their respective boxes. It may well be a Northern Irish thing !

Thus the Thinking of the so-called "Progressives" must change, certainly in the ABC, and address the realities of a globalist world where national 'state sovereignties' are breaking down exponentially. The 19th century traditions of the trade union dominated Labor Party can only protect sectional interests and are intellectually ill-equipped to respond to governance issues at all levels with their increasing international connections and dependencies. The return of China and India to their historical economic levels of well over half world production, in a western designed free enterprise and free trade political system, means enormous challenges for Human Rights and Democratic Forms. The question of Property Relations, whether Marxist or otherwise, in a Multicultural world will need to be reopened and debated as the basis for a massive shift of wealth from the Anglosphere to the new regions of influence as represented in global institutions such as the UN Security Council, World Bank, IMF, ILO, G20 etc.

Perhaps Tony can find inspiration from the first 'new world' 266th Catholic Pope Francis? I do not think the British Monarchy will have much enlightenment to offer. And the Chinese certainly, with their reinvigorated Marxist education for journalists, will not be listening.

So to the Chamber and its future logistics of philosophies and thinking strategies, always remembering that our foundation AGM was 16th September 1976 - a week after Mao died. At that time no-one knew the future of China and its impact so quickly and dramatically on the world - it has been both an exciting and rough ride so far.

Just over 18 months ago I wrote my last Observations 7 re 17th June 2012. Observations deals with the strategic and medium to long term whereas my Comments are tactical short term deliberately inflammatory responses to current issues. Thus a quieter, more reasoned and systematic approach is required for Observations. Some might argue that is not possible for me, but I shall try.

Superficially during 2012 and 2013 much has changed but? It is like knowing the price/date of everything/events but the value/meaning of nothing. Barack Obama is back as US President until

November 2016 - can Hillary Clinton succeed him for 4/8 years? Xi Jinping is likely President of the PRC until early 2023 - ten years unless the CPC implodes. The trajectory of China economically, politically, socially and culturally is more unknown than at any time since the 1949 Revolution. Gillard and Rudd are gone and Tony Abbott by default may well be Prime Minister of Australia for two or three terms until the early 2020s. Unless of course his dogmatist personality traits like Kevin Rudd's flakiness hasten his demise? What does each Administration aspire to achieve in terms of their legacies beyond the winning and losing of elections on specific individual policy issues - what will be Abbott's historical governance value/meaning for Australians and their Indauspac region/world.

Can Australia as a member country of the UN Security Council, and from early December 2013 President of the G20, play a significant role in current global affairs. What inspirations/legacies might we leave this generation in Australia in terms of Human Rights or historical contributions to the welfare of humanity?

This Observations 8 is directed to the logistics, or "the detailed organization and implementation of a complex operation", of the ACCCI philosophies and website thinking strategies 2001-2013 - the period after China joined the World Trade Organisation (WTO). Observations 9 will outline an Action Programme in general terms such as not to compromise existing and future special projects. The details are already on the ACCCI website, or have been honed in countless internal emails between Chamber Board and executive committee members. The three arms of the Chamber organisation are well known as they have evolved over the last four decades - Peoples' Diplomacy or the crossing of State Sovereignty "borders", Global Economic Relations or the challenge to existing institutions of the return of the Peoples Republic of China, Private Enterprise funding of business initiatives via special projects throughout Indauspac including EU involvements.

To again briefly restate Chamber's evolution based on an understanding of Chinese history, and particularly the Cultural Revolution 1966-76

- 1) Preparatory meetings to official launch in September 1976
- 2) Anticipating China economics/politics after Mao to 1979
- 3) Promoting Australia China connections through Sister-State and City Relationships to 1987
- 4) Participating in the "internal" China governance debates to end of US trade sanctions in 1993
- 5) In Australia campaigning for China's admittance to APEC and subsequently the WTO in late 2001
- 6) Recognition of China's economic surge throughout the region/world to the GFC in 2008
- 7) Responding to China international expansion as a Global Economic Power to the present
- 8) Championing China's "space" in international institutions- economic, political, social and cultural to 2020

In practical terms this has meant an evolution of Chamber activities with respect to Australia China relations from initially export/import, to two-way investment and financial ties, to the most broadly based economic relations, to participation in regional/global economic and subsequently political organisations, and more recently to debate on issues of governance both public and private. It has meant a more clear identification of Australia's region of critical importance - the maritime Indian-Pacific-Southern Oceans or Indauspac, and the institutions/nations which must respond to China's economic, political, social and cultural projections of power. The years of simply bilateral strategic thinking in Australia-China Relations are long gone. The philosophies of globalism beyond national borders and rigid concepts of State Sovereignty are now front and central in discussions of productivity, freedom of information and libertarian values wherein Free Enterprise and Free Trade must interface with Democratic Forms and Human Rights. China cannot economically "democratise" the world and yet remain politically a Leninist and/or Marxist Party State.

The newly elected Australian Tony Abbott led Federal Coalition Government faces some awesome challenges. Our own government is seriously deficient in areas of Democratic Forms, Human Rights, Property Relations and Multiculturalism, namely Freedom of Information (FOI) which is the basis for Freedom of Speech and almost everything else in a Free Society. What example are we setting the 'new kid on the block' - China? What are the practical results of our Australia-China Human Rights Dialogue since 1997? Just as domestically in Australia there has been an unholy "arrangement" if not alliance between big business and the trade unions since at least the 1950s, is there currently a steady movement by China's CPC/PRC Party State to economically duress the corporations of the world including the national companies of Australia? In our country a new growth industry providing lucrative employment, either 'for' or 'against', for retiring Australian China Ambassadors, trade officials and academics?

The China phenomenon becomes more complicated by the year, if not month. Unbelievable urbanisation of hundreds of cities that has taken 500/600 million people out of poverty, with the projection of another 300/400 million over the next 35/40 years. A wealth factor that enables hundreds of millions of Chinese tourists, students and business people to literally "flood" the world with purchasing power that raises house prices everywhere simultaneously. The Chamber saw it coming but few in Australia were listening. We again ask the question of President Hu Jintao's visit to Australia in 2007: What happens when over 50% of Australia's trade is with China? What are the ramifications of China buying most of the retreating US business interests in Australia? And the economic and political implications for the Abbott Anglosphere?

Some benchmarks:

- 1) 1987-93 maintain Australia's engagement with China - Taiwan as the leading province.
- 2) 1992-96 formalise the ACCCI Key Cities Strategy via signed Cooperative Agreements - eventually approximately 200
- 3) 1995-1999 targeting broad industry sectors in Urban Services, Rural Industries, Infrastructure and Commercial Culture
- 4) 1999- 2004 establishing special projects/programmes in Inward Investment, Innovation and Technology Commercialisation, Education and Business Training, Tourism Sites and Services
- 5) 2002-2008 reorienting Chamber's key city Strategy based on about 16 Chamber delegations to China re five Zones of Greater Sydney and the "two strokes" re Shanghai to Chengdu and Xian to Urumqi; plus launch of the 5 China Monitors including the Indauspac Strategy/Watch concepts as the basis for interpreting US/PRC Global Economic Relations with a special emphasis on the G20.
- 6) 2008-2013 closure post GFC of the old 200 city ACCCI Network in China re the China Liaison and National Liaison Committees and move to Think Tank focus on Governance at six levels - District, City, Province, Central, Regional and Global. As already mentioned a lot of work has been directed to linking Democratic Forms with Political Parties including the mechanisms of the CPC and KMT; Human Rights and Multinational Corporations including corruption; Property Relations and Global Commons/Poverty including Intellectual property issues in Free Trade Agreements; Multiculturalism and representation on/democratisation of global institutions.

During 2013 and leading up to the Australian Federal Election in September Chamber emphasised, when "liaising" with the Clive Palmer United Party, Julian Assange Wikileaks Party and the "progressive" elements of the Liberal Party, three policy objectives for the next decade namely Productivity, Freedom of Information and Libertarian values. In this context our internal discussions addressed the desires of ordinary people, whether Australia, China or the world, for:

- a) Security - can the Australian people remain protected?

- b) Stability - is there an economic shock around the corner?
- c) Predictability - what do companies do in the face of massive manufacturing industry contractions?
- d) Consistency - do Australians understand their government's philosophy/policies?
- e) Opportunity - will the kids have the same education and standard of living?

To begin we would like to know what are the Abbott Government's objectives/programmes for Australia's twelve months as President of the G20 and membership of the UN Security Council.?

How will Foreign Minister Julie Bishop approach the East Asia Summit (EAS) in the context of our Anglosphere philosophy and 5-Eyes intelligence spying re China, Indonesia and East Timor in particular?

Are we happy with the outcome of the WTO in the context of Australia's significant trade negotiation concessions to South Korea and likely other FTAs with Japan, China and India?

Will the recommendations of the government's Audit, Financial, Competition, Trade Union and multitude of other Inquiries be implemented during 2014 and/or the first term of the Abbott Age?

Will Abbott be the Infrastructure PM?

We know that the boats will not be turned back, the debt won't be cancelled and there will be some form of ETS. Lets just put the promises down to "thought bubbles" during a very long three year election campaign.

My conclusion, and that of many others, is that State Sovereignty, facing accelerating globalised economic forces resulting in part from massive technology change and innovation, is limited. Borders are fast becoming anachronistic. Despite the Luddite behaviours of governments, particularly with respect to FOI, international institutions are step by incremental step taking precedence in the thinking of all leaders at all levels of governance. Just read any reputable newspaper any day. To survive in a whatever altered form the smaller countries need new genuinely representative global institutions which may in fact be based on the great urban centers (cities) of the world.

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