

The Australian Centre on China in the World

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China's Power and the Future of Australia

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I am very grateful for Ben Penny's invitation to deliver this year's CIW lecture, especially as the invitation is a little unusual. These lectures have in the past been delivered by exceptionally distinguished sinologists like Geremie Barme and Wang Gangwu, whereas my work focuses on Australia, and its place in the world and in Asia.

In recent years I have spent a bit of time thinking about what China means for Australia, so of course I have had to try to learn something of China.

I've been very lucky that many friends and colleagues in CIW and beyond have been so generous in helping me. Some of them are here tonight. Despite their best efforts, however, I am all too aware of how little I know about China still.

If there is any excuse for my nonetheless accepting Ben's kind invitation, it is that China is now so important to Australia that to understand what it means to us it is no longer enough just to look at China itself.

We must look at the wider international system in which we sit, to see what China means for that system. And we must look at ourselves - who we are, what we stand for and how we make our way in the world - to understand the choices and challenges that China today poses for us. And that is what I will try to do this evening.

I need not spend much time persuading you that the subject is topical. Countless issues have animated a debate about how Australia should manage its relations with China.

I want to contribute to that debate tonight, by challenging the way we frame it. I want to argue that the terms of our debate do not yet encompass the nature and scale of the issues and choices that we face, as we face the power of China.

That's why the title of my talk refers a little portentously to 'the future of Australia'. I hope to persuade you that this is a fair description of what's at stake. It is much bigger than we think.

Our national debate about China today focuses on whether, and if so how, we should modestly adjustment a range of current policies on specific issues in response to the challenges that are posed and the opportunities that are offered by China's economic growth.

Policies on things like extradition, foreign investment, political donations, media ownership and language education. These are of course all important issues. But to imagine that they exhaust the range of questions that we face is to assume that China's rise makes no more than a marginal difference to our international environment and the way we manage our international relations, and requires only marginal adjustments to our policies and practices in response.

But that is wrong. China's rise is among the two or three biggest shifts in its international setting that Australia has ever faced, comparable to, and perhaps bigger than, the collapse of the British Empire and the decolonisation of Asia.

It is already fundamentally changing the international order globally, and especially in Asia. It is already challenging us fundamentally to rethink our place in Asia, and that in turn requires us to re-examine who we are ourselves.

So I want to suggest to you this evening that we still haven't begun to understand what China's rise means – how completely it changes the world, the region we live in and our place in it, and how much we will be changed by it. Our debates about China have hardly begun.

This is a story about national power, so I need to start by saying something about that. National power is the capacity of one state to shape its international setting to suit its interests, especially by influencing the conduct of other states.

National power can be manifested and exercised in many ways, and can be affected by many factors, but history strongly suggests that its primary ultimate source is the scale of a nation's economy – its GDP. If you doubt this, think back to Britain wealth and power in the 19th Century, and America's in the 20th Century. The correlation between wealth and power, between preponderant wealth and preponderant power, is pretty plain.

When a country becomes very powerful – as Britain and America have been – they have the capacity to shape not just their immediate international environment, but the whole system in which they work.

That is just what Britain and America have done over the last couple of centuries, as we know. We proudly proclaim that today's international order has been built on their ideas and values, and that happened because they were, in turn the world's richest and most powerful countries.

China's rise brings that era to an end, because China will be the world's richest and most powerful country in the 21st century. It is remarkable that this statement still has the power to shock, and that so many of us are still so sure it's not true.

Of course it is not absolutely certain; nothing in human affairs is. But the reasons often given to doubt it look to me very flimsy. The foundations and trajectory of China's power are much more robust than most of us are willing to admit.

Of course China's growth has slowed, and will no doubt slow further. But the source of China's power today does not lie in its current growth rate, but in the scale of the economy built up over

three decades of sustained, super-fast growth. It is locked into the scale of its workforce and the nature of the economy as it has developed since 1979, which will not disappear.

Even if China's economy flat-lines in the years ahead, it will still be a bigger than America's in PPP terms. And it is very unlikely to flat-line. Indeed, for all its problems, and the clear risk of short-term crises, China is likely to keep growing faster than America on average over coming decades, and to overtake it by a big margin even in MER terms.

Demographic problems won't stop that happening – its workforce will shrink, but remain far bigger than America's or anyone's except India's. And don't bet in the middle-income trap.

Even if it gets stuck there, China's economy will still be the biggest in the world. And it might not - its economy is much more sophisticated than many people think, with real capacity for innovation and entrepreneurship.

Perhaps most importantly, we'd be unwise to bet that China's rise to power will be swamped by political turmoil. The CCP faces many challenges, but there is little evidence that it is about to go under. And even if it did, the long-term economic consequences are far from clear.

History suggests that even big revolutions do not permanently collapse major economies – after a period of chaos, often quite short, they bounce back. It would take a crisis as deep and long as China's collapse in the 19th century to permanently reverse the gains of the past 35 years. Don't bet on that happening.

So we would be wise to get used to the idea that China will be the world's wealthiest and strongest power in the 21st Century. PwC's most recent estimate is that by 2030 – 13 years away - China's GDP will be 113% of America's in MER terms, and 165% in PPP terms. In 1990, barely a generation ago, it was 6% of America's.

It's the biggest and fastest shift in the global distribution of wealth and power the world has ever seen. For Australia the numbers are just as stark; in 1990 our GDP was 88% of China's in MER terms, and by 2030 the estimate is 7%.

This does not mean that China will rule the world. It will be the most powerful state in a world with many other powerful states – including America, which will remain very formidable - and it will not be able to dominate regions of the world far from its borders.

But it will be by far the strongest state in the Western Pacific, and will be very well placed to become the dominant power there. That is the new reality we have to face, and so far we are not facing it. We are in denial about it.

That is not surprising. Since Europeans first settled here in 1788 our region has been dominated by Britain and America. We have always relied on them to keep us safe and to shape Asia to suit our interests. We have felt able to rely on them because of our shared Anglo-Saxon heritage of language, history and values.

We have always believed that our security and prosperity here on the edge of Asia depended absolutely on their regional primacy, and all our major wars have been fought to help preserve it.

None of those challenges were as formidable as the one posed by China today, because since 1788 no other country has been as powerful as China is today, nor as important to Australia in so many dimensions of our national life.

That includes, most obviously, its importance to us economically. That is something we are *not* in denial about. We do understand that China is not just our biggest trading partner today, but that it is the most important source of future economic opportunities for us for decades to come.

We know that its economic scale and dynamism means our future prosperity depends on it. But we still don't understand what that means for our relations with China and our place in Asia more generally. To understand that, we have to recognise that the era of Anglo-Saxon preponderance in Asia is over, and accept that this changes everything.

Our reluctance to accept this is embodied in a form of words – one might even say a mantra – which over the past few years has come to dominate official statements about what China's rise means for Australia. 'We don't have to choose between America and China'. Mr Turnbull said it just two weeks ago during Mr Li's visit.

What does it mean? First, it expresses a true and welcome fact about the past. For three decades after 1972 Australia didn't have to choose between America and China, because they were not strategic rivals.

John Howard could assure Beijing that while Australia's alliance with America was non-negotiable, nothing we would do as a US ally would be directed against China. That allowed Australia to build a cosy niche, relying on China to make us rich and America to keep us safe.

That worked well as long as America's attention was elsewhere, and China was biding its time and hiding its power. Its days were numbered once China began overtly challenging US leadership in Asia around 2008.

It stopped working in November 2011 when Barack Obama came to Canberra to announce his Pivot to Asia, which was his response to China's challenge. By launching it in Canberra, Obama made it absolutely clear that he expected Australian support to resist China's ambitions. Howard's undertaking was no longer tenable. We had to start making choices.

Since then the mantra has been simply untrue. We are choosing between America and China, all the time, as we try to assure America that we are supporting them against China, and we try to assure China that we are not. So, for example, we have joined Washington in denouncing China's conduct in the South China Sea, but avoided Beijing's displeasure by resisting US pressure to conduct FoNops.

We agreed to host Marines in Darwin, but denied that had anything to do with China. We joined China's AIIB but avoided any explicit endorsement of OBOR. The list goes on. The reality is that every decision we make about our support for America is judged by how it will be read in Beijing, and vice versa. This is the most powerful factor in Australia's foreign policy today.

Some might call this delicate balancing act a commendable example of agile diplomacy. One could also call it a pattern of systematic duplicity, which is fooling no one but ourselves. Diplomatic duplicity has its place when it is used in support of a clear and credible strategy, but not as a substitute for one.

Ultimately, this duplicity is futile. Whether we have to choose between America and China has very little to do with us. It depends on them, on how intense their rivalry becomes, and on what they choose to demand of us. The more intense their rivalry grows, the more they will each demand of us, and the starker our choices will become.

It is perfectly possible that sometime, perhaps quite soon, their rivalry will reach the point that one or other of them confronts us with a choice which would upset our balancing act and force us to fundamentally alienate one side or the other. ‘We don’t have to choose’ is no more than a statement of blind faith that this will not happen.

What’s more, it is a statement of faith that nothing really is going to change. It is based on the hope that we can go back to the way things were in John Howard’s day, when America’s power and leadership in Asia seemed unchallengeable, and China seemed happy to accept it. But seriously, how likely is that?

Over the past few years, as the rivalry between America and China has intensified, some people even in government have started see that ‘we don’t have to choose’ is wearing a bit thin, and to wonder whether we do not in fact have to make some choices after all.

Not surprisingly, the overwhelming majority of them think that we should choose America. But their views are not all the same. We can divide them into optimists and pessimists.

The optimists believe that China’s challenge to US leadership in Asia and the rules-based order can easily be countered by a show of US strength and resolve, backed by strong support from America’s allies and friends in Asia.

They think Beijing is trying it on, in other words, and will back off quickly if they meet determined resistance. If that is true, Australia should get off the fence and start supporting America much more robustly as it pushes back against China.

But is it true? The idea that China was just trying it on were the foundation of President Obama’s Pivot to Asia. It assumed that China would quickly back off in the face of largely symbolic gestures like the marine deployment to Darwin.

But China has proved that wrong, by countering the Pivot and its gestures with a series of much more forceful moves in the East and South China Seas which show that China is willing to risk a confrontation with America. Instead it has become clear that it is America that is unwilling to risk a confrontation.

That was the message sent by Obama’s refusal to authorise full-strength freedom of navigation operations in the South China Sea. So far, then, China has been winning.

But the Optimists are still optimistic. They hope that the Pivot – under whatever new label it might be given in Washington - can still be made to work. It just needs a stronger dose.

America needs to push back harder than Obama was willing to do, accepting short term damage to the US-China relationship for the long-term gain of defeating China's challenge. Some hope Mr Trump might do this.

It is argued that US allies like Australia should encourage him to do that, by being willing support America and confront China with a strong show of solidarity.

Hence, for example, there are voices in Government and in the Opposition who think that we should be undertaking, and urging America to undertake, full-strength FoNops in the South China Sea to confront China's moves there directly.

Again, this would be a good policy if it works. Preserving US primacy would be immensely beneficial for Australia, and it would be worth even a serious temporary disruption of our relations with China if it leads to a permanent preservation of the *status quo*.

But that will happen only if China does indeed back off in the face of stronger pressure. Many people simply assume it will, but it is not quite clear why. There is no reason to believe that China is any less determined to change the Asian order and expand its influence than America is to preserve the old order under its leadership.

Indeed, there are good reasons to believe that the balance of resolve favours China.

To see why, we have to reflect more deeply on the nature of their rivalry. The headline issues - the South China Sea, the East China Sea, North Korea, even Taiwan - are just the symptoms of their rivalry. Its cause lies much deeper, in the fundamental incompatibility of their current strategic objectives in Asia.

America seeks to remain the region's primary power, and China seeks to replace it. This is the most consequential strategic contest globally since the end of the Cold War, and in Asia since Nixon went to China in 1972.

So we are back in the world of power politics, which is what happens when great powers compete over leadership in an international system. The stakes are very high because states see their place in the system as central to their security, their prosperity and their identity.

Compromise is possible but rare. Thucydides was wrong to say that war in such circumstances is 'inevitable', but it is certainly a big risk, because armed force and the willingness to use it are the key factor in power politics.

History suggests say that the boundaries of each great power's influence in an international system are determined ultimately by the issues over which it is demonstrably willing to go to war with other great powers.

So the contest for leadership in Asia will be determined by the issues which America and China can each persuade the other they are willing to go to war over.

This all sounds rather Wagnerian, and very remote from the usual image of our modern, rational rules-based age. But this is just what's happening today in the South China Sea.

Each side is testing how far the other is willing to risk a confrontation that might turn into an escalating armed clash. Neither side wants a war, of course, but each has been pretty confident that the other would back off first to avoid a clash – leaving them the winner.

That creates a very dangerous situation with a high chance that they both find themselves sliding into a war that neither side wants or intends. It has happened often enough before.

We would be very unwise to underestimate China's resolve in this contest. China does not seek a fundamental transformation of every aspect of the Asian order, but it is determined to achieve, or restore, its leadership of that order.

That should not surprise us. It is after all seeking no more than Britain and America sought when their power rose. And China's ambition is turbocharged by awareness of China's long history of power, recent humiliations, current achievements and future prospects. We might regret this, but we'd be unwise to underestimate it.

And we'd be unwise also to overlook the likelihood that China assess America's resolve as weaker than their own.

They are not reckless in Beijing, but looking at America as it is today, its record of strategic failure over the past decade and half, the feebleness of the Pivot, the peculiarities of US politics and the apparent trends in its policies, it would be surprising if Beijing did not believe that America was less committed than they are to the leadership of Asia.

And 50 missiles on Syria won't change their mind.

They don't want a war with America, but they probably think they can achieve their aims in Asia without one, because they think America will back off.

All this means that the optimist are probably wrong. Supporting America to push back harder against China is unlikely to get us where we want to go. It is more likely to lead us into a war with China.

And that brings us to the pessimists. They are the people who can see that Beijing might not back down, so preserving US leadership in Asia might require a war with China, and they think that might be an acceptable price to pay. This is not such an uncommon view as one might think. We need to think carefully about whether they are right.

Much depends of course on what kind of war we think that would be. Many seem to assume that a war with China would be short, contained and successful – something like Desert Storm at sea. But that is very unlikely.

This is not the place to explore the evolving maritime military balance in Asia, so let me just say that we can't count on quick low-cost wins against China in the Western Pacific anymore.

Any localised clash would probably produce a costly stalemate for both sides, with irresistible pressures to escalate. It could easily become the biggest regional conflict since 1945, and it is hard to imagine what would count as victory in such a war, for either side.

Moreover it would be a war between nuclear powers. We have become strangely insouciant about the risk of nuclear war between major powers since the end of the Cold War, and that is a big mistake.

No one knows where the nuclear threshold might be in a US-China war, so no one can be sure that it would not be crossed. The danger that any clash between America and China could escalate to a nuclear exchange may not be high, but does not need to be. It is very real.

And what about Australia? Would we, and should we, join America in a war with China to preserve US primacy in Asia? This is not a hypothetical question. Indeed at one level Australian governments have already answered it.

Despite their devotion to the 'we do not have to choose' mantra, and their reluctance to risk relations with Beijing by siding too openly with Washington in the diplomatic manoeuvring of recent years governments from both sides have steadily moved towards a defence policy that assumes Australia should and would send forces to support America in a war with China.

Moreover they have begun increasingly to design our armed forces to do just that.

Would we really do so? Many people say that we would have no choice. We are so dependent on America for our defence, and so deeply entangled with their systems and operations, that we simply could not contemplate saying no when the White House called – even if the person calling was Donald Trump.

I think that is entirely wrong. Of course we would have a choice, and it would be a very difficult one.

On one side would weigh the undoubted damage to our alliance with America if we refused. But on the other would weigh not just the damage to our relations with China, but the very real costs and consequences of the war itself – especially as we could not assume that America would win.

This would not be just a matter of diplomatic positioning, like the choice to help invade Iraq in 2003. Given the likely nature of the war, it would be a choice of immense significance to every aspect of our national life - one of the most momentous Australia had ever faced.

I think it is rather shocking that so many of those who make or analyse Australian strategic policy treat it so lightly. For what it is worth I think we would very likely say no.

The risk that we will face such an agonising choice is perhaps lower than the pessimists might assume, because it seems to me increasingly unlikely, in the light of what I've just been saying, that America would not in fact be willing to fight a war with China in any but the most extreme circumstances.

Certainly, America has huge interests in Asia, and has been the leading power there for a century. It would be a huge wrench to step back from all that. But China today is the most formidable strategic rival America has ever faced in Asia.

So we have to wonder what, if anything, in Asia would America be willing to fight a war with China – perhaps a nuclear war – over? Unless there is a much clearer answer than we have seen of late, the era of US strategic leadership in Asia will draw to a close. That may well be what is already happening.

There is a third option. America could do a deal with China by agreeing to share leadership in Asia. That would mean China playing a bigger role, and America a smaller one.

But it would still leave America as a significant player, able to balance China's power and place some limits around the way China used it. This is plainly the least-bad option for Australia and others in Asia, and perhaps also for America.

But it would be hard to achieve and maintain, requiring statecraft of the highest order. Moreover the time to do such a deal is slipping away, and it may be too late now that Donald Trump is in the White House.

He is not the cause of America's problems with China, but his failings make it much less likely that America can deal with them effectively. They seem to make it rather more likely that America will thoughtlessly stumble into a war with China, or ignominiously retreat from the region, or both.

This all suggests that turning to America is not going to solve our China problem. Whatever happens, even if America does manage to stay engaged, China is going to loom much larger for us, exercising more power and asserting more influence, than any Asian power has ever done before.

And it is quite likely that it will take America's place as the region's primary power, at least in East Asia. So how then are we to respond to its growing capacity to interfere in our affairs and curtail our sovereign independence?

Part of the answer is to get closer to China. In the last few years some influential voices – some of them here tonight – have argued that we need to get real about China's growing power and start dealing with it.

They argue that if we can deepen and strengthen our relationship with China, we will be able to influence China's policies towards us and limit their impact on our independence and interests.

They accept, reluctantly, that this might mean stepping back somewhat from our relationship with America.

These views are surely right as far as they go. We must get closer and more engaged with China as China's power and influence grow.

That means, among other things, that we must learn a lot more about how decisions are made in China and how to shape them to our advantage, and we should give higher and higher priority to shaping our policies to maximise our leverage there.

But we need to be coldly realistic about how far that will get us. Our history tells us plainly how hard it has been to do more than nudge the policies of our close allies, and we will never have the kind of entre and access in Beijing that we have enjoyed with them.

No matter how well we do, our capacity to shield ourselves from Beijing's power by better diplomacy is going to be very limited. They will be able to shape our actions and decisions with carrots and sticks to a degree that no country has ever been able to do before except America and Britain – and we would be right to fear that China will be less generous with the carrots and more ruthless with the sticks than our old allies have been.

Indeed this is already true. We should not underestimate China's capacity now to shape our policies. It is sometimes argued that Beijing cannot pressure us by threatening our export markets because it depends on our exports to fuel its own economy.

That is so when it comes to current trade, but that is not their best economic pressure point. Our real vulnerability is our expectation that future trade with China is the key to our economic prospects.

China can play on that very easily. Consider, for example, the consequences for Canberra of a Chinese threat to punish us for some policy misdemeanour by directing *future* investments and export opportunities – in minerals, energy, education, tourism or agriculture – away from Australia. That would cost China nothing, but send our share market crashing.

Nor should we underestimate the political costs that Beijing can already impose on an Australia government. A Chinese threat to suspend high-level meetings would freeze the blood of any Australian Prime Minister and induce all kinds of accommodations.

It was, after all, just this kind of pressure that nudged Howard to reach his understanding with Beijing, and that was back in 1996, when China's wealth and power had hardly begun to take off.

Moreover, though our island continent is mercifully far from China, we should not entirely dismiss the weight of China's military power as a factor in its future influence on Australia.

Japan, the Philippines and Vietnam can all attest to China's willingness to use carefully calibrated military threats to amplify its influence, and we'd be deluding ourselves to assume that this is necessarily counterproductive.

Moreover two of these are US allies, so we need to recognise that this won't necessarily shield us completely even if America preserves a strong role in Asia. The simple fact is that as China's

power grows it becomes both a more important partner and a more dangerous adversary for America, so the threshold for US intervention to deflect Chinese military pressure on its allies must go up.

All of this is very disconcerting. We take great pride in our sovereign independence of policy and action, and we hate the idea of it being curtailed by a foreign power.

This feeling is perhaps particularly strong in Australia, because we have no experience of making our way in the world without the support and protection of our very powerful great and powerful friends. We feel that something must be going very badly wrong in the world if we find ourselves subject to pressure by others.

But in reality this is the way the world always works, because that is what powerful states do. Even us. Twenty years ago Australia applied immense pressure on PNG to abandon plans to deploy merceries to Bougainville.

We might all agree that the plans were foolish and dangerous, but there could be no doubt that it was PNG's decision to make. We were interfering in PNG's internal affairs. In the end we got our way. It was a classic exercise of national power.

And had diplomacy failed, plenty of people in Canberra were willing to contemplate the use of force. Few Australians objected. So let's not be unrealistic about the inviolability of sovereignty.

Might does not equal right, but it does determine how much you have to pay to maintain your view of what is right in the face of superior power, and weaker countries must get used to calculating such things.

What then should we do, given how likely it is that we will face such calculations more and more as we come face to face with China's power? What are we really willing to do, and what price are we really willing to pay, to resist China's bid for regional primacy, and limit its influence over us? How far would we accept and accommodate it? How do we really feel about living in an Asia dominated by China and what are we willing to do to avoid it?

I hope I have gone some way to convince you that these are the questions we really need to be debating. Answering them is way beyond my scope tonight. Instead I want to finish by mentioning a couple of issues about China, about which we are going to have to learn more and think more if we are to address these broader questions adequately.

One is about what China wants. What kind of regional leadership will it try to exercise? Would it be more like America's relatively soft hegemony in the Western Hemisphere, or more like Stalin's harsh dominion over Eastern Europe?

Our images of China's ambitions as a rising power are still very simplistic, and we need to learn a lot more if we are to make better-informed choices about what they mean for us and how we should respond to them.

The second set of issues concerns the moral standing of China today. This exceptionally difficult question is in fact at the heart of our topic. I don't know what the answer is, but I do know that we have not yet taken the question seriously enough.

A few years ago I heard a senior Australian official say, quite bluntly, that Australia could not possibly accept China playing a bigger leadership role in Asia because its political system is fundamentally evil.

Few of us might go that far, but most of us agree that China's values are very different from ours, that for Australia to accept China playing a larger leadership role in Asia would be to compromise our values, and that that is something we simply could not and should not do.

Mrs Bishop spoke along these lines in Singapore recently. 'Our values are not transactional' as one of our leading columnists wrote last week.

I do not think it is nearly that simple. We speak with great confidence of our values, but they are hard to define. We perhaps prefer to keep them vague, because that spares from examining them too closely.

It makes it easy to think that our moral and political choices are simple black and white ones between right and wrong – right if we uphold our values, and wrong if we compromise them.

But that assumes that all our values are consistent with one another – that they all pull us in the same direction – and that is not so. We value democracy and a rules-based order, but we also value peace.

Those values weigh on opposite sides when we consider how to respond, for example, to Chinese assertiveness in the South China Sea. So the idea that we never compromise our values is simply wrong – we do it all the time, when we weigh one value against another. Let us be quite realistic about this. We will compromise some of our values as we adjust to living with a powerful China; the questions are which ones will we compromise, and how much?

We need to get beyond this crude sloganeering and think a lot more carefully about our values and how they affect our choices as we decide how to respond to China's power.

We also need to understand China's values better, and how much they really differ from ours. We are very keen to assert and emphasize those differences, but their precise nature deserves more attention.

That is not to deny there are differences, and that those differences can be seen in aspects of Chinese policies and practices that we find harsh and unjust.

But it is to note how little attention we pay to the other side of the ledger. China's government has achieved the largest increase in human material welfare in history.

In the span of just a generation it has transformed the lives of hundreds of millions of people for the better in very concrete ways – better food, better housing, better education and health care – all things that we recognise as having real moral weight.

Where do we place all that in our judgments of China's moral fitness to lead in Asia? Surely we can't simply ignore it.

So if we are going to understand how to respond to China's power we are going to have to take the trouble to think much more deeply about China itself, and do more justice to the complexity of what has been happening there over the past few decades.

And whatever happens, we need to accept that whether we like it or not Australia is going to be profoundly changed by all this – just as we have been changed by those earlier titanic shifts in our international setting. How those changes occur, and what we become as a result of them, depends in part on how well we recognise what is happening, understand them, and manage them.

So let me end there. My conclusion is simple enough. We are going to be living with a very powerful China. It will have more influence over Australia than any country, apart from our great allies, has ever had before.

How we handle that will quite probably do more to determine our national trajectory, and to define our national identity, than any other choice we now confront. We have not yet begun seriously to address it. Instead we continue to rely on America to fix it for us. That is most unlikely to work.

We must sort this out for ourselves. And to do that we must know a lot more – a lot more – about China, and think much more deeply about it. So we really need our sinologists, and we really need them to see how important their work is to our future. And that, of course, is what CIW is all about.