

Media Roundup Issue 16 (15/04/17 – 21/04/17)

1. If China dukes it out with the US, Australia will be a target: filmmaker

15/04/2017
Stephen A Russell
The New Daily

As tensions boil between the US and North Korea, with China caught in the middle, Australian journalist and filmmaker John Pilger warns that America, so often portrayed as the world's policeman, is part of the problem.

What's worse, Australia will be on the front line of any conflagration with President Xi Jinping's China if we don't unshackle ourselves from US foreign policy, Pilger tells *The New Daily*.

"Either we choose to be a vassal state, integrated yet again into the war plans of a rapacious great power, or we choose to be independent," Pilger insists. "There is hardly any intelligent debate on this vital subject in Australia any more."

Read More:

<http://thenewdaily.com.au/entertainment/tv/2017/04/15/the-coming-war-on-china/>

2. End US alliance and pivot to China, says overseas Chinese society

17/04/2017
Primrose Riordan
The Australian

A Sydney-based aged-care and childcare provider with links to the Chinese government has called for an end to the Australia-US alliance.

In a foreign policy white paper submission made to the Department of Foreign Affairs, the Chinese Australian Services Society said Australia should stop being America's "deputy sheriff" in the Asia Pacific.

La Trobe University China expert Nick Bisley said the submission showed the soft influence of the Chinese government on community organisations.

Read More (Paywall):

<http://www.theaustralian.com.au/news/nation/end-us-alliance-and-pivot-to-china-says-overseas-chinese-society/news-story/c20d7ed85d58585d8e24efe843df07fc>

3. Beijing plan 'to pressure Taiwan', says Michael Thawley

18/04/2017

**Primrose Riordan
The Australian**

China will use commercial pressure on international companies to seize Taiwan and undermine US military control in Asia, says the nation's former top public servant Michael Thawley.

Former prime minister Tony Abbott appointed Mr Thawley as the head of the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet in 2014.

He was also the Australian ambassador to the US under the Howard government.

Now in a podcast for equities firm Capital Group, which he returned to work for after he left the department, Mr Thawley said China was attempting to dominate Asia militarily and "pressure" Taiwan to join the mainland.

Read More (Paywall):

<http://www.theaustralian.com.au/national-affairs/foreign-affairs/beijing-plan-to-pressure-taiwan-says-michael-thawley/news-story/f6a57f6a25cbf9069133eba6911aa309>

4. India cannot cushion the blow if China stumbles now

18/04/2017

**James Laurenceson
Australian Financial Review**

Australia and India's strategic and economic interests are converging. So declared a joint statement last week signed by Australia Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull and his Indian counterpart, Narendra Modi.

This convergence, the statement added, opens up more opportunities for the two countries to work together in a rapidly changing region.

No doubt true.

But amid this newfound enthusiasm, Australian policymakers would do well to keep another truth in mind: Australia's shared interests with India have not converged anywhere near to the point they could provide stability were our relationship with China to go seriously off the rails.

Read More:

<http://www.afr.com/opinion/columnists/india-cannot-cushion-the-blow-if-china-stumbles-now-20170418-gvmuy4>

5. China must do 'whatever it takes' to bring rogue to heel, says Turnbull

19/04/2017

**Primrose Riordan
The Australian**

Malcolm Turnbull has urged Chinese leaders to do “whatever it takes” to stop North Korea’s nuclear threats, and help avoid the rogue nation “raining down devastation on its neighbours”.

As the Department of Foreign Affairs sought public consultation on how to expand Australia’s sanctions against North Korea, the Prime Minister said it was time for China to take control of the deteriorating situation.

DFAT is examining bans aimed at North Korea’s airline, Air Koryo, and the country’s mining sector, as well as measures to block North Korean aligned ships docking in Australia.

Read More (Paywall):

<http://www.theaustralian.com.au/national-affairs/foreign-affairs/china-must-do-whatever-it-takes-to-bring-rogue-to-heel-says-turnbull/news-story/64221b7552b97df060e525f3ce71657d>

6. China's economy is slowing, but there is one sector booming: tourism

19/04/2017

Michael Pascoe

Sydney Morning Herald

Iron ore prices are retreating again and the overall Chinese economy is growing less quickly, but one sector is skyrocketing: outbound tourism.

The United Nations World Tourism Organisation preliminary 2016 scorecard has Chinese spending \$344 billion as foreign tourists, a jump of 12 per cent in local currencies and more than double the splurge of the next biggest spenders, Americans.

And while the more mature Australian outward bound tourism market can't compete with those Chinese numbers, we still recorded one of the highest spending growth rates of 8 per cent as we left \$35.6 billion behind us overseas.

Read More:

<http://www.smh.com.au/business/china/chinas-economy-is-slowing-but-there-is-one-sector-booming-tourism-20170418-gvn6r8.html>

7. Rising yuan could be a headwind for Australian developers

19/04/2017

Elizabeth Redman

The Australian

Australia's biggest apartment developers could be hit by a strengthening Chinese currency that could further slow the outflow of funds from the country, according to research from Northern Trust.

Offshore demand for residential property has been in focus as Chinese investors, worried about a falling yuan, as well as hopeful of good educational opportunities for their children, moved funds to Australia, the US, Canada and Britain to buy housing stock.

But the currency has been stabilising this year, which could affect the flow of funds out of China, according to a report from the Chicago-based wealth manager, which has more than \$US900 billion (\$1.18 trillion) in assets under management.

Read More (Paywall):

<http://www.theaustralian.com.au/business/property/rising-yuan-could-be-a-headwind-for-australian-developers/news-story/0ff20348fbeb14f673c5041bde87ff63>

8. Rise in China visitors our chance to shine

20/04/2017

Bernard Salt

The Australian

By my estimation, a significant development will take place next month, and it will pass with little fanfare. In fact, we won't even be sure it's happened until late June or around the time the main census results are released.

In May 2017, the number of visitors to Australia from China will overtake the number of visitors from New Zealand. For 20 years the Kiwis have held sway as our biggest visitor market. Before that it was the Japanese — it takes a decade or two for foreigners to tire of the Aussie schtick. By this measure China will dominate Australian inbound tourism for the whole of the 2020s.

When the census is conducted every five years we ask overseas visitors their age, gender and whether in fact they are a visitor. At the 2011 census there were 219,000 overseas visitors in Australia, up 16,000 or 8 per cent over the 2001 figure.

Read More (Paywall):

<http://www.theaustralian.com.au/business/opinion/bernard-salt-demographer/rise-in-china-visitors-our-chance-to-shine/news-story/608f552e800e127cd4515665c55d6b40>

9. Australian firms must act now; US catching up on China FTA

20/04/2017

**Rowan Callick
The Australian**

The upbeat figures on the Chinese economy this week will have come as a big relief to Scott Morrison and Malcolm Turnbull.

Growth of 6.9 per cent in the first quarter, with exports up 16.4 per cent in March, indicates plenty of demand still for Australian goods in our biggest market.

This performance is underpinned, as is so much in China, by politics.

Read More (Paywall):

<http://www.theaustralian.com.au/business/opinion/rowan-callick/australian-firms-must-act-now-us-catching-up-on-china-fta/news-story/5d5dff108e00acd2cc0901d4097308c7>

10. Australian property developer's encounter with Interpol most-wanted Guo Wengui

20/04/2017

**Kirsty Needham
Sydney Morning Herald**

Beijing: An Australian property developer says he is “very happy” at the news that Interpol has issued a red alert notice for the arrest of a Chinese tycoon, member of Donald Trump’s Mar-a-Lago, living exile in New York.

“He is a very bad man,” says Melbourne’s Zheng Jiefu, who says his family and business had been threatened by the flamboyant billionaire. “He did damage to my business and damage to my family”.

While some social media users on Wednesday labelled Guo Wengui, aka Miles Kwok, as “China’s Julian Assange”, after his live internet broadcast in which he made corruption allegations against senior political figures, Mr Zheng says he knows a darker truth.

Read More:

<http://www.smh.com.au/world/australian-property-developers-encounter-with-interpol-mostwanted-guo-wengui-20170420-gvol9s.html>

11. Those in fear of Amazon ought to worry more about Alibaba and Tencent

20/04/2017

Tony Boyd

The Australian Financial Review

When it comes to global e-commerce the much feared online retailer Amazon is now exactly a minnow but it is well and truly overshadowed by China’s Alibaba Group and Tencent Holdings.

While it is understandable that local retailers, distributors, shopping centre owners, and logistics companies are worried about Amazon’s arrival in Australia, the threat posed by the two powerful Chinese internet giants is arguably much greater.

Alibaba and Tencent have the technology, the financial strength and the growth potential to become the world’s two largest providers of e-commerce services.

Read More (Paywall):

<http://www.afr.com/brand/chanticleer/those-in-fear-of-amazon-ought-to-worry-more-about-alibaba-and-tencent-20170420-gvoz72>

12. Senator Nick Xenophon warns China could sink Australian navy ships to warn US

21/04/2017

David Wroe

Sydney Morning Herald

Powerful crossbench senator Nick Xenophon has warned China could sink an Australian naval ship to send a message to the United States if tensions escalate in the South China Sea.

And he has raised the spectre of calls for Chinese Australians to be interned in camps if conflict broke out between China and the US and her allies including Australia.

Writing in Fairfax Media on Friday, Senator Xenophon argues the cost of conflict with China would be so high that it outweighs any obligation Australia should feel to join its ally the United States in pressuring Beijing to curb its activities in the strategic waterways.

Read More:

<http://www.smh.com.au/federal-politics/political-news/senator-nick-xenophon-warns-china-could-sink-australian-navy-ships-to-warn-us-20170420-gvopur.html>

13. Australia's economy struggling as dollar bucks China-driven drop in iron ore

21/04/2017

Michael Heath

Sydney Morning Herald

Australia is caught in a disconnect between the trajectory of its key commodity export and a currency that refuses to follow suit, constricting an economy that policy makers are trying to stimulate.

Iron ore has slumped 30 per cent since Chinese Premier Li Keqiang signalled plans on March 5 to cut his nation's steel capacity. The world's No. 2 economy is Australia's biggest trading partner and iron ore exports account for more than 3

per cent of gross domestic product Down Under. The Aussie dollar, meanwhile, has barely budged in the past month as it trades around US75 cents.

“Really, it should be going lower,” said Andrew Ticehurst, a rates strategist at Nomura Australia in Sydney, who notes a declining US dollar is helping prop up the Aussie.

Read More:

<http://www.smh.com.au/business/mining-and-resources/australia-bucks-chinadriven-drop-in-iron-ore-20170420-gvooda.html>

14. India to block Australia from naval exercise amid concerns it could inflame diplomatic tensions with China

21/04/2017

Andrew Greene

ABC News

An Australian Defence Force bid to join multilateral naval exercises is poised to be blocked by India over concerns it could inflame diplomatic tensions with China.

For a quarter of a century military assets from the United States and India, and more recently Japan, have come together for joint annual naval drills known as Exercise Malabar, north of Australia.

In 2007 Australia took part in the Malabar Exercises, but withdrew from the quadrilateral drills and accompanying security talks following concerns expressed by Beijing.

Read More:

<http://www.abc.net.au/news/2017-04-21/india-tipped-to-block-australia-from-naval-exercise-china/8459896>