

Media Roundup Issue 33 (12/08/17 – 18/08/17)

1. Crown boss Jason O'Connor released from Chinese jail

12/08/2017

Rowan Callick & Sarah-Jane Tasker
The Australian

Jason O'Connor, the most senior of the Crown Resorts' employees to be jailed in China, was released from Shanghai's Number One Detention Centre – where he had been held for 10 months – at first light on Saturday morning.

The head of Crown's VIP business, arrested during a visit to China last October during a co-ordinated raid that also netted 16 other employees and two former staff, was taken by officers of China's Export and Entry Administration – its border police – to Pudong Airport.

From there, he was deported to Australia, as ordered by the Baoshan District Court that sentenced him in June.

Read more (Paywall):

<http://www.theaustralian.com.au/business/crown-boss-jason-oconnor-released-from-chinese-jail/news-story/0577167492f8b32ea75714286c2bd100>

2. Chinese retreat from Australian property market

13/08/2017

Angus Grigg & Lisa Murray
Australian Financial Review

Chinese property buyers are turning away from Australian housing as efforts by regulators in both countries to slow investment begin to bite.

Chinese buyers, who make up about 80 per cent of all foreign property purchases in Australia, have grown wary after being hit by Beijing's tightened capital controls, local banks restricting lending and growing fears of an over-supply in the capital city apartment market.

The drop-off in Chinese demand for Australian property marks a noticeable shift from just a year ago when buyers from the mainland were seen to be dominating apartment purchases in many inner city suburbs.

Read more (Paywall):

<http://www.afr.com/real-estate/residential/chinese-retreat-from-australian-property-market-20170813-gxv6t3?btis>

3. 'China thinks Donald Trump is bluffing on North Korea': Kevin Rudd

14/08/2017

Peter Mitchell

Sydney Morning Herald

Chinese President Xi Jinping is a “hard arse” and US President Donald Trump should use clear, quiet diplomacy instead of tweets in dealing with China on North Korea, former Australian prime minister Kevin Rudd says.

Mr Rudd, who has returned to the US from a trip to China, said “the Chinese baseline conclusion” is Mr Trump’s threat of unilateral military action against North Korea was just “one huge bluff”.

China, because of this view, will only do a few things to try and talk North Korea into coming around to a more reasonable posture, Mr Rudd told CNN’s *Fareed Zakaria GPS* on Sunday.

Read more:

<http://www.smh.com.au/world/china-thinks-donald-trump-is-bluffing-on-north-korea-kevin-rudd-20170813-gxvdwg.html>

4. Kevin Rudd’s \$53m China centre ‘under review’

14/08/2017

Primrose Riordan

The Australian

The future of former prime minister Kevin Rudd’s flagship \$53 million China centre at the Australian National University is under a cloud after the institution ordered an external review.

In 2010, Mr Rudd handed his alma mater, the Australian National University, \$35m as a foundation grant, and \$18m for a new building to establish an Australian Centre on China in the World.

Mr Rudd said it would become the “pre-eminent global institution” for understanding contemporary China and urged for China to be understood beyond “the binary language of the Cold War era”.

Read more (Paywall):

<http://www.theaustralian.com.au/national-affairs/kevin-rudds-53m-china-centre-und-er-review/news-story/83aba6d5f6e60a32c1770867a1948cdf>

5. China deadline for dairy exporters of infant formula

14/08/2017

Editorial

The Australian

The clock is ticking for Australian infant formula producers to complete a suite of new regulatory hurdles, in order to be able to keep selling their powder in China after January 1.

So far, it was announced this week, only 40 per cent of the present exporters of formula to China – from all international sources, the Australian proportion is not separately available – have filed applications for the new registrations required.

A spokesman for Australia’s Department of Agriculture and Water Resources told *The Australian* that the China Food and Drug Administration had not provided a specific timeframe on how long it required to assess an application for brand registration.

Read more (Paywall):

<http://www.theaustralian.com.au/business/china-deadline-for-dairy-exporters-of-infant-formula/news-story/d8b45de3ccb240f0f6bd547775e7402b>

6. Lessons in Crown's China nightmare as execs return home

14/08/2017

Michael Smith

Australian Financial Review

Crown Resorts learned the hard way that the rules for foreign businesses operating in China can change on a dime. In this case the consequences came with a human as well as financial cost when 16 of its staff, including three Australians, were subjected to a horror 10-months in detention in Shanghai.

The last of the remaining Crown employees jailed in China were freed over the weekend. The most high-profile of these was senior Melbourne-based executive Jason O'Connor who is now back with his family in Australia and trying to avoid the media limelight after his traumatic incarceration. It is unclear if he will return to work at Crown. The complexities around how local gaming regulators view charges against staff in other countries will complicate things.

Read more (Paywall):

<http://www.afr.com/brand/chanticleer/lessons-in-crowns-china-nightmare-as-exec-s-return-home-20170814-gxvmmi?btis>

7. Malcolm Turnbull's ANZUS offer on North Korea was premature

14/08/2017

James Curran

Australian Financial Review

Prime Minister Turnbull's pre-emptive invocation of the ANZUS treaty during a radio interview last Friday was not only extraordinary and unprecedented, it was also premature and unnecessary.

Two problems in particular stand out.

The first is that the comments, even if unwittingly, contributed to the escalatory tempo of a week in which the rhetoric flying between Pyongyang and Washington was already red-hot.

No-one doubts that the US and Australia share common cause in wanting to see the crisis on the Korean peninsula resolved peacefully. But instead of adding to

the talk of war, Turnbull would have been wiser to stick to his foreign minister's script – stressing the continuing need to put the Australian shoulder to the diplomatic wheel. It was perfectly reasonable, then, for the New Zealand Prime Minister Bill English to stress that any such US request would be assessed “on its merits”.

Read more (Paywall):

<http://www.afr.com/opinion/columnists/opinion-malcolm-turnbulls-anzus-offer-on-n-orth-korea-was-premature-20170813-gxv66x>

8. China now beats New Zealand as Australia's top source of tourists

15/08/2017

David Scutt

Business Insider Australia

June was a historic month for Australia's tourism sector.

For the first time ever, New Zealand was displaced as Australia's top source of short-term visitor arrivals, replaced by Australia's largest trading partner.

In trend terms, the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) said that 111,700 Chinese citizens arrived in Australia during July, surpassing 110,900 New Zealanders that arrived over the same period.

Over the year, New Zealand remained the top source of arrivals at 1.3527 million, higher than the 1.2691 million total from China.

However, much like the monthly number, it appears to be only a matter of time until China takes that mantle, too.

Read more:

<https://www.businessinsider.com.au/china-now-beats-new-zealand-as-australias-top-source-of-tourists-2017-8>

9. Our economic destiny is China, not America

16/08/2017

James Laurenceson
Australian Financial Review

Ask the average Australian whether China or the US is the country's most important economic partner and you'll likely get a bewildered look – it's China, of course. The Lowy Poll shows that by 2013, 76 per cent of Australians were already convinced that China was No.1, compared with just 16 per cent choosing the US.

In fact, this year 43 per cent of Australians said they regarded China as Australia's most important relationship overall. This was the same proportion nominating the US, our security ally.

Over the past 12 months China snapped up \$95 billion of Australian goods, eight times more than bought by the US. What's become apparent more recently is also China's voracious appetite for Australian services, worth another \$11 billion.

Read more (Paywall):

<http://www.afr.com/opinion/columnists/our-economic-destiny-is-china-not-america-20170816-gxxc6e?btis>

10. Chinese Australians in supercars protest India on its 70th Independence day

16/08/2017

Heidi Han
SBS Online

On Tuesday 15th August at around 12:40pm, a fleet of supercars, organised by a Sydney-based Australian Chinese automobile club, started their parade, led by a red Bentley covered by Chinese flag pattern.

Bentleys, Lamborghinis, BMW, AUDI and Maseratis were among the 10 luxury cars that joined the parade across Sydney, passing three universities including Sydney University, the University of New South Wales and the University of Technology Sydney. It comes not long after a spate of racist anti-Chinese graffiti and posters were identified in Universities across Australia.

Additionally, the cars continued their parade past some places of interest including Chinatown, Martin Place, Sydney Opera House, the Art Gallery of NSW, before arriving at their ultimate destination – the Consulate General of India in Sydney.

The cars were decorated with the Chinese flag and stickers featuring slogans including: “Borderline is our baseline;” “China: Not even a bit can be left behind;” and, “Anyone who offends China will be killed no matter how far the target is.”

Read more:

<http://www.sbs.com.au/yourlanguage/mandarin/en/article/2017/08/16/chinese-australians-supercars-protest-india-its-70th-independence-day>

11. ‘No alternative’ to South China Sea exercises, John Howard says

18/08/2017

Primrose Riordan

The Australian

John Howard has hardened his position on the South China Sea, predicting Australia would eventually join US-led freedom-of-navigation exercises to “hold the ring” against Chinese expansion.

The former prime minister also endorsed US President Donald Trump’s critique of EU defence spending, accusing it of “bludging” off the US “for decades”.

Speaking at an Institute of Public Affairs event alongside former Abbott government national security adviser Andrew Shearer, he said China had “violated the international rules-based order” and Australia should be “willing” to be part of any pushback.

Read more (Paywall):

<http://www.theaustralian.com.au/national-affairs/foreign-affairs/no-alternative-to-south-china-sea-exercises-john-howard-says/news-story/6576c4f46157b3bb1cb0f04cb2f94d77>