

## Media Roundup Issue 46 (11/11/17 – 17/11/17)

### 1. Malcolm Turnbull calls North Korea 'criminals', urges Hong Kong to help

**12/11/2017**

**Lindsay Murdoch  
Sydney Morning Herald**

Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull has accused North Korea of being one of the world's most "cunning, sophisticated criminals," involved in many serious crimes, including drug trafficking, in his strongest condemnation yet of the dictator Kim Jong-un.

And Mr Turnbull told US president Donald Trump and China's president Xi Jinping during a leaders' retreat in Vietnam that their relationship is one of the "single most priorities for the world today," urging them work together to pressure North Korea over its nuclear weapons program.

"If they can see eye to eye and cooperate on North Korea, for example, that problem, that regime, will be brought back to its senses," he said.

*Read more:*

<http://www.smh.com.au/federal-politics/political-news/malcolm-turnbull-calls-north-korea-criminals-urges-hong-kong-to-help-20171112-gzjp85.html>

### 2. Free speech fears after book critical of China is pulled from publication

**13/11/2017**

**Nick McKenzie & Richard Baker  
Sydney Morning Herald**

Australian publisher Allen & Unwin has ditched a book on Chinese Communist Party influence in Australian politics and academia, citing fear of legal action from the Chinese government or its proxies.

The publisher's chief executive, Robert Gorman, said last week that it would abandon publication of a completed manuscript by Clive Hamilton, a professor

of public ethics at Charles Sturt University, called *Silent Invasion: How China Is Turning Australia into a Puppet State*.

"We have no doubt that *Silent Invasion* is an extremely significant book," Mr Gorman wrote in a confidential email to Dr Hamilton on November 8.

*Read more:*

<http://www.smh.com.au/national/free-speech-fears-after-book-critical-of-china-is-pulled-from-publication-20171112-gzjiyr.html>

### 3. Hedging China: Australia joins security dialogue with US, Japan, India

**13/11/2017**

**David Wroe**

**Sydney Morning Herald**

Australia has taken part in a four-way meeting with the United States, India and Japan regarded as a first step towards deeper co-operation to balance China's strategic expansion.

Senior officials from the Department of Foreign Affairs met with counterparts on Sunday in the Philippines "to discuss a shared vision for increased prosperity and security in the Indo-Pacific region and to work together to ensure it remains free and open", a statement from the department read.

Deeper co-operation between the four major democracies, known as the "quadrilateral security dialogue", has been a contentious issue because China has interpreted it as an effort to contain its rise.

The department's statement - and those by the other three nations - did not mention China. But the Australian statement said the "shared challenges" under discussions included "upholding the rules-based order in the Indo-Pacific and respect for international law, freedom of navigation and overflight".

*Read more:*

<http://www.smh.com.au/federal-politics/political-news/hedging-china-australia-joins-security-dialogue-with-us-japan-india-20171113-gzk2qv.html?btis>

#### 4. Australia brushes off China's protests over new security pact

**14/11/2017**

**Phillip Coorey**

**Australian Financial Review**

Malcolm Turnbull has brushed aside concerns from China over Australia, the United States, Japan, and India joining forces to revive a regional security dialogue aimed at countering the influence of Beijing.

In a meeting between the Prime Minister and Chinese Premier Li Keqiang on the sidelines of the ASEAN and East Asia Summits in Manila, the issue of the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue (QSD) was diplomatically not mentioned but Mr Turnbull reaffirmed his long-stated view about the need for a rules-based order in the region.

He told Mr Li that a code of conduct that China claims will lead to stability in the region needed to be effective, legally binding and in accordance with international law, rather than a time-buying exercise.

*Read more (Paywall):*

<http://www.afr.com/news/australia-brushes-off-chinas-protests-over-new-security-pact-20171112-gzjxp4>

#### 5. ASEAN summit: China fumes at show of force

**14/11/2017**

**Primrose Riordan**

**The Australian**

Malcolm Turnbull has joined Donald Trump and Shinzo Abe in delivering a "strategic" show of force in response to increasing Chinese power in the Asia-Pacific region.

The leaders met in The Philippines yesterday after quadrilateral security talks on Sunday involving officials from the US, Japan, Australia and India.

The four-way meeting was attacked yesterday by Chinese foreign ministry spokesman Geng Shuang who said the nations were "politicising or excluding relevant parties", referring to their failure to include China.

Mr Turnbull, in a sign Australia is building partnerships to maintain the influence of liberal international law in the region, held yesterday's high-profile meeting with Mr Trump and Mr Abe.

*Read more (Paywall):*

<http://www.theaustralian.com.au/national-affairs/foreign-affairs/asean-summit-china-fumes-at-show-of-force/news-story/dcd6825ce627000a8d9eac9dad32ace9>

## 6. Freedom and openness in the Asia Pacific free and open for interpretation

**14/11/2017**

**James Laurenceson  
East Asia Forum**

In the week prior to US President Donald Trump embarking on his Asia tour, his National Security Adviser H R McMaster laid out one of the trip's aims: 'to promote his vision of a free and open Indo-Pacific region'.

McMaster explained the key components of this vision: freedom of navigation and overflight, rule of law, sovereignty, no coercion, private enterprise and open markets. It is intended that US allies and partners like Australia will play a key role in translating this rhetoric into action, even if exactly what this means in practice remains to be seen.

Last month US Secretary of State Rex Tillerson made it clear that (North Korea aside) the United States regarded China as the main country undermining its 'free and open' vision, while a quadrangle of the United States, India, Japan and Australia were hailed as its core defenders.

China has left itself exposed to the charge.

*Read more:*

<http://www.eastasiaforum.org/2017/11/14/freedom-and-openness-in-the-asia-pacific-free-and-open-for-interpretation/>

## 7. China Premier Li Keqiang says Australia relations will improve

**14/11/2017**

**Primrose Riordan  
The Australian**

China's Premier Li Keqiang has said relations with Australia are set to improve as he revealed he hung a photo of the two leaders wearing AFL scarfs in his office.

It has been a rocky year in the relationship with Australian leaders and department heads opening voicing concerns about Chinese government interference in Australian society.

Further, there has been a number of trade issues with six of Australia's largest beef export firms banned over a labelling issue.

But in the opening remarks open to the media, Mr Li set a lighter tone and said the two countries were good friends. He said he expected bilateral relations to improve.

Chinese Premier Li Keqiang has attempted to set a lighter tone by reminding Mr Turnbull about the time they watched an AFL game together.

*Read more (Paywall):*

<http://www.theaustralian.com.au/national-affairs/foreign-affairs/china-premier-li-ke-qiang-says-australia-relations-will-improve/news-story/22719af5de628bee21cfef86188e00cb>

## 8. 'Overhaul nation's defence strategy' to handle China's rise, experts warn

**15/11/2017**

**Brendan Nicholson  
The Australian**

Australia needs a new defence strategy to deter, and if necessary, defend itself against an increasingly powerful, aggressive China, two of the nation's most experienced strategists have warned.

Former senior Defence officials Paul Dibb and Richard Brabin-Smith say the nation faces an increased prospect of a threat from a major power for the first time since World War II.

Professors Dibb and Brabin-Smith, from the Australian National University, say their main concern is the rapid growth of China's economic and political influence in the region and its ambitious program of military modernisation and expansion.

*Read more (Paywall):*

<http://www.theaustralian.com.au/national-affairs/defence/overhaul-nations-defence-strategy-to-handle-chinas-rise-experts-warn/news-story/f1505a6ef228f7af27d04818c80447c9>

## 9. China's rise poses a growing threat to our defences

**15/11/2017**

**Paul Dibb & Richard Brabin-Smith**  
**The Australian**

Australia's strategic outlook is deteriorating and, for the first time since World War II, we face an increased prospect of a threat from a major power.

China's aggressive policies and its use of coercion are grounds for concern that it seeks political domination of countries in our region, including Southeast Asia.

There is a real risk that Southeast Asia is becoming a Chinese sphere of influence. Peter Varghese, the former secretary of the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, has described the Association of Southeast Asian Nations as a broken reed.

*Read more (Paywall):*

<http://www.theaustralian.com.au/opinion/chinas-rise-poses-a-growing-threat-to-our-defences/news-story/e3c9906323403df6b8d5daab7057b34a?login=1>

## 10. Straight-talking plan to strengthen our military

**15/11/2017**

**Greg Sheridan**  
**The Australian**

Paul Dibb and Richard Brabin-Smith have done Australia a service by speaking so bluntly about our deteriorating strategic circumstances and the need to strengthen our defences.

Identifying China's military expansion and rapid territorial conquests in the South China Sea as a potential threat is brave, tricky, delicate and complex.

As they rightly observe, it is wrong to assume China will be hostile to our interests.

We should do everything we can to positively engage the Beijing government.

*Read more (Paywall):*

<http://www.theaustralian.com.au/opinion/columnists/greg-sheridan/straighttalking-plan-to-strengthen-our-military/news-story/8102107159ecc5308b667de8a7c5406d>

## 11. Bennelong by-election: Chinese ties could be the deciding factor

**15/11/2017**

**Brad Norington**

**The Australian**

Labor played well to changing demographics in 2007 when it fielded Maxine McKew as a respected outsider in the federal seat of Bennelong.

McKew had no left-wing pedigree, and she spoke engagingly with local voters.

Critical to Labor's successful push to oust John Howard was the unthreatening prospect of its candidate appealing to the Chinese population of Bennelong.

In normal circumstances, Howard, despite his criticism of Asian immigration earlier in his career, was respected and still a good fit for Bennelong, because he was a conservative.

McKew needed to be capable of competing for the support of voters in the seat, many of them Chinese businesspeople who might be reluctant to vote out the prime minister as their local member.

*Read more (Paywall):*

<http://www.theaustralian.com.au/opinion/bennelong-byelection-chinese-ties-could-be-the-deciding-factor/news-story/4eedbe5bdb92c192d0ad9449479d3f5e>

## 12. Dissident's son stopped at airport on way to university in Australia

**15/11/2017**

**Rowan Callick  
The Australian**

An 18-year-old Chinese student intending to study at Melbourne University was on Monday barred from leaving the country because his mother is a prominent human rights lawyer.

Migration officers at Tianjin Airport cut up the passport of Bao Zhuoxuan in front of him — on instruction, they said, from State Security Ministry colleagues in Hohhot in Inner Mongolia, where the family lives.

His father, Bao Longjun, asked *The Australian* by phone: “What has our son done wrong, to stop him going to study?”

“What crime has he committed to place him under such persecution?”

The reason given to the young man by the officers at the airport was that “your departure may jeopardise state security, so you’re not allowed to leave China”.

*Read more (Paywall):*

<http://www.theaustralian.com.au/national-affairs/dissidents-son-stopped-at-airport-on-way-to-university-in-australia/news-story/e98fb2be5b97bff97eee4b48ee2dab8e>

## 13. Chinese Nationalism Jostles With Academic Freedom in Australia

**15/11/2017**

**Xiuzhong Xu  
The New York Times**

It was a routine quiz in a university business class in Australia, but the answer to one of the questions was a surprise: Chinese officials are truthful only when careless or drunk.

Gao Song, a student from China at Monash University in Melbourne, was so upset that he condemned it online. His post created a stir back in China, where it was quoted in the local news media. The Chinese Consulate in Melbourne contacted him requesting regular updates. Global Times, an influential state-run newspaper in China, asked him to write articles about the incident.



Under pressure, the university judged the question to be inappropriate, and it suspended the professor.

“As China is becoming more and more powerful, we have strong backing even when we’re overseas,” said Mr. Gao, 24. “When others find faults with China, we can stand up to them and tell them we Chinese are great.”

*Read more:*

<https://www.nytimes.com/2017/11/15/world/australia/china-students-censorship.html?r=0>

## 14. A sobering strategic assessment

**16/11/2017**

**The Australian**

The blunt assessment by Paul Dibb and Richard Brabin-Smith of the potential threat Australia faces from China has introduced an overdue element of realism and urgency into our defence debate. It must not be ignored. Their forthright conclusion in their paper for the Australian Strategic Policy Institute — that for the first time since World War II “we must now reckon with a major power capable of doing us serious damage” — demonstrates the need to focus on the evolving danger.

Commendably, the two former deputy defence secretaries, both with vast experience in strategic policy, have no time for the diplomatic sensitivities that seek to suggest our multi-billion-dollar submarine, frigate and missile acquisition programs have a potential enemy other than China in mind. “No other major power is likely to threaten us militarily in the foreseeable future,” they warn. “China’s militarisation of the South China Sea has brought its power projection capabilities 1200km closer to Australia’s vulnerable northern approaches.” There is also a risk, they note, of Southeast Asia becoming a Chinese sphere of influence. “Individual Southeast Asian countries are drifting into China’s orbit ... Beijing is steadily eroding our strategic space ... this is shortening the time Australia has to understand, prepare and, if necessary, respond to adverse military developments.”

*Read more (Paywall):*

<http://www.theaustralian.com.au/opinion/editorials/a-sobering-strategic-assessment/news-story/77ebcbcb8a3b862d49bcad4929749396>

## 15. Australia's Misplaced Fear Over China's Belt and Road

**16/11/2017**

**James Laurenceson, Simone van Nieuwenhuizen, & Elena Collinson**  
**The Diplomat**

China may be Australia's largest trading partner by far, and an increasingly important source of investment. But Canberra remains conflicted in how to respond to the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI).

After turning down Chinese overtures to sign a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on BRI cooperation when Chinese Premier Li Keqiang visited in March, Trade Minister Steven Ciobo announced in September that an MOU has now been signed. But that came with the proviso that cooperation was limited to investment and infrastructure in third countries, which may include BRI projects.

In contrast, Australia's neighbor, New Zealand, signed a wide-ranging MOU earlier this year and is now in the middle of an 18-month project to formulate a detailed work plan.

*Read more:*

<https://thediplomat.com/2017/11/australias-misplaced-fear-over-chinas-belt-and-road/>

## 16. Why Has Australia Shifted Back to the Quad?

**16/11/2017**

**Grant Wyeth**  
**The Diplomat**

With a shifting balance of power in the Indo-Pacific Australia has begun to more seriously contemplate how it can best maintain the conditions that have served its interests well. In recent weeks this has involved

Australia's re-engagement with the group of like-minded regional states: the United States, Japan, and India. The grouping, colloquially known as "the Quad," held a significant meeting of senior officials on the sidelines of the ASEAN summit in Manila last week.

The Quad was previously seen as less of a formal alliance, and more a strategic partnership with a desire to preserve common interests in the Indo-Pacific region, including a desire to balance China's rise. Yet even with careful treading

to try and avoid Chinese suspicions, the Australian government under then-Prime Minister Kevin Rudd found the grouping to be in too much conflict with Australia's economic relationship with China, and decided to withdraw Australia from further formal discussion in 2008. However, it now seems Australia has now decided to put aside its previous reluctance in order to take a more assertive stance.

*Read more:*

<https://thedi diplomat.com/2017/11/why-has-australia-shifted-back-to-the-quad/>

## 17. Marise Payne dismisses calls for new China defence strategy

**16/11/2017**

**Rory Callinan**

**The Australian**

Defence Minister Marise Payne has rejected calls to adopt a new defence strategy to address what two former deputy Defence secretaries claim is the growing threat China poses to the Australian mainland.

In a research paper released this week, emeritus professor Paul Dibb and honorary professor Richard Brabin-Smith called for Australia to develop “an anti-access and area denial” capability to contain China’s expanding military facilities.

The call has divided China-watching academics, with one responding that Beijing’s military focus was not on Australia’s mainland and that the focus should be on the potential for the rise of another Islamic State in the region and China’s cyber warfare threat.

Another questioned whether it was feasible to stand up to China militarily without the full backing of the United States.

*Read more (Paywall):*

<http://www.theaustralian.com.au/national-affairs/marise-payne-dismisses-calls-for-new-china-defence-strategy/news-story/c19299c3fd02cbf6f99c5b15e3c2b0e7>

## 18. Warning over China's 'hard power rise'

**16/11/2017**

**Rowan Callick  
The Australian**

Outspoken Labor MP Michael Danby has delivered a tough speech in Japan warning of China's rise in "hard power", and praising the "push-back by Australia's democratic system" against soft power initiatives.

Speaking to a Citizen Power Initiatives For China conference in Tokyo, the member for Melbourne Ports and former chairman of the Parliamentary Joint Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade, said: "Many countries like Australia want to maintain good commercial and trading relations with China."

But Australia's push-back has resulted from China's "blatant Comintern-like activity," referring to the former Soviet Union-based international communist organisation.

*Read more (Paywall):*

<http://www.theaustralian.com.au/national-affairs/foreign-affairs/warning-over-china-s-hard-power-rise/news-story/04a6a0502ab9578d3c94d65cd04ad397>

## 19. No need to self-censor in the face of China

**16/11/2017**

**Merriden Varrall  
The Interpreter**

The recent decision by Allen & Unwin to drop Clive Hamilton's book on Chinese influence illustrates that China need not exert much effort in influencing us. We're doing the job ourselves.

Hamilton's book *Silent Invasion: How China is Turning Australia into a Puppet State* was pulled, according to an email from the publishers, because of 'potential threats to the book and the company from possible action by Beijing'.

That's a fair few 'potentials' and 'possibles'. From the information available, it seems that China has not actually taken any action to influence this particular decision at all. With the heated debate in Australia at the moment about Chinese influence, Allen & Unwin have made an enormously controversial

decision, especially given recent events with Cambridge University Press and Springer Nature.

This is an important point - no actual pressure has been exerted by China. Rather, the publisher appears to have chosen to self-censor, just in case.

*Read more:*

<https://www.lowyinstitute.org/the-interpreter/no-need-self-censor-face-china>

## 20. China's agents of influence run for cover

**17/11/2017**

**Paul Maley & Rowan Callick**  
**The Australian**

Chinese community groups closely affiliated with Beijing's Communist Party have begun lowering their profile ahead of new foreign interference laws aimed at cracking down on China's growing involvement in Australian political affairs.

As the government prepares to introduce new laws aimed at cracking down on foreign espionage, one of the foremost experts on the Chinese Communist Party's activities in Australia, Chongyi Feng, said the looming crackdown had not gone unnoticed in Beijing.

His comments came as outspoken Labor MP Michael Danby delivered a tough speech in Japan warning of China's rise in "hard power" and praising the "push-back by Australia's democratic system" against soft power initiatives. Mr Danby accused China of "Comintern-like activity" and said it had increasingly pursued efforts to influence the politics and economies of neighbours in Southeast Asia and the Pacific, "as an aspect of Mr Xi's overall program to - compete with the influence of the US globally".

*Read more (Paywall):*

<http://www.theaustralian.com.au/national-affairs/foreign-affairs/chinas-agents-of-influence-run-for-cover/news-story/7f9fde7243fa1f2ba489af0e2a9d86e0>

## 21. How should Australia defend itself against a rising China?

**17/11/2017**

**Peter Layton**

**The Interpreter**

The rise of China is the big international relations issue of our time. Unsurprisingly then, various solutions have been suggested to the strategic concerns China creates for Australian defence. In a rather broad sense, three alternatives are emerging.

The most recent is a 'defence of Australia redux' proposal by two eminent Australian strategic thinkers, Paul Dibb and Richard Brabin-Smith. They see a darkening strategic landscape where 'for the first time since World War II, we face an increased prospect of threat from a major power.' They worry not just about China but also Indonesia and its vulnerability to Islamic extremism. Their solution is for Australia to develop a competent anti-access/area denial (A2AD) capability. If the Chinese A2AD approach can keep the Americans at bay, the argument goes, then maybe we can do the same and keep a potentially hostile China or Indonesia at arms length, or at least deter them. The ADF force structure under this strategy would stress air and naval forces rather than a larger army.

*Read more:*

<https://www.lowyinstitute.org/the-interpreter/how-should-australia-defend-itself-against-rising-china>