

Media Roundup Issue 51 (16/12/17 – 22/12/17)

1. Pollies' summer reading revealed, from Deakin to Musk, Flanagan to le Carré

12/12/2017

Troy Bramston
The Australian

As an eventful political year draws to a close, it is encouraging that many politicians managed to take a breather and enjoy a good book. It is no surprise they are also eyeing a haul of summer reading that can energise the mind and enliven the soul. A survey of about 30 politicians' reading choices is, as always, revealing.

Malcolm Turnbull has the most ambitious reading list, nominating 11 books for himself and a further 10 to read to his grandchildren. His list includes Sebastian Smee's *The Art of Rivalry*, Joe Biden's heartfelt *Promise Me, Dad* and Judith Brett's *The Enigmatic Mr Deakin* — the only title from the pompous list of books that the Grattan Institute advises him to read.

Julie Bishop also has a diverse assortment, starting with Julian Guthrie's *How to Make a Spaceship* alongside Bret Baier's fascinating account of Dwight D. Eisenhower's farewell address, *Three Days in January*, plus Bates Gill and Linda Jakobson's ***China Matters***.

Read more (Paywall): <http://www.theaustralian.com.au/opinion/columnists/troy-bramston/pollies-summer-reading-revealed-from-deakin-to-musk-flanagan-to-le-carr/news-story/5248cd82b52ff355753f581097e02966>

2. Satellite pictures reveals China may be preparing South China Sea islands for war

16/12/2017

Jamie Fullerton
The Australian

Satellite pictures show that China has developed more than 70 acres of land that could be used for military purposes in two disputed island clusters in the South China Sea.

Images released by the Asia Maritime Transparency Initiative, based in Washington, show new building over 72 acres including hangars, missile storage centres and radar bases in the Spratly and Paracel islands.

The monitoring group said that they could be used to supply nearby outposts with military equipment.

It said Fiery Cross Reef, in the Spratly archipelago, had hangars, airstrips and underground structures that probably held munitions.

Read more (Paywall): <http://www.theaustralian.com.au/news/world/the-times/satellite-pictures-reveals-china-may-be-preparing-south-china-sea-islands-for-war/news-story/26899aa61cb991202c187e4b9ce769d5>

3. Turnbull's 'war of words' with China driven by internal politics

17/12/2017

George Mikhail

The Global Times

The spectacle of the "war of words" between Australian Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull and China is no more than a rhetorical gesture by a leader who is under siege to appease hard-liners with deep-seated "cold-war" views of the indefensible Anglo-American supremacy.

It may seem like a low point in Sino-Australian relations, but such a spectacle only overwhelms observers and disconnects them from the machinations of political expediency.

Our seemingly progressive and pragmatic prime minister, cognizant of the new geopolitical realities, found himself performing quite the balancing act between Australia's strategic economic interests with China and its strategic defense alliance with the US. This left him in a precarious position for not pandering to the whims of an institutionalized conservative oligarchy who are not only at best distrustful of China, but also fail to recognize the end of Anglo-American exceptionalism and the onset of the Asian Century.

Read more: <http://www.globaltimes.cn/content/1080706.shtml>

4. Why Australia needs a smarter China policy

17/12/2017

Merriden Varrall

South China Morning Post

With the 45th anniversary of official Australia-China ties around the corner, Australia should be gearing up to celebrate. Instead, we find ourselves mired in one of the lowest points of our relationship in many years.

This week, the Australian ambassador to China was summoned to the Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs to discuss recent developments concerning accusations of Chinese influence in Australia. This followed Cheng Jingye, the Chinese ambassador to Australia, lodging a formal complaint to the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade about the “wild and morbid” accusations. Chinese media has been producing a heavy dose of negative reports about Australia while the Australian press has been featuring no shortage of stories about the dangers of Chinese influence.

Read more: <http://www.scmp.com/week-asia/opinion/article/2124554/why-australia-needs-smarter-china-policy>

5. Chinese Australians deserve protection from Beijing

18/12/2017

Fergus Hanson

The Australian

The Australian Chinese diaspora was under the microscope at the weekend in Bennelong with the power to decide the by-election and, in turn, whether the government would retain its majority. The heated campaign rhetoric even drew a clumsy response from Beijing with talk of McCarthyism and “hysterical paranoia”. In some ways it was a taste of the increasingly important role the Chinese Australian community will play and the increasing pressure it is likely to come under from Beijing. While these Australians are going to be key to helping us navigate an East Asia that China seeks to dominate, are we doing enough to -

ensure they are able to integrate into Australia free from the Chinese Communist Party's heavy-handed interference?

Australia has a compelling reason to embrace this cohort of more than a million of us of Chinese heritage. Our relationship with China is one of our most important international partnerships and will become only more important over time. China is already well and truly our largest trading partner, largest source of foreign students and second-largest source of tourists. At the same time China is becoming increasingly assertive. To make sure Australia continues to benefit from this relationship we need to draw on the networks, language skills and cultural knowledge of Chinese Australians to staff our government departments, build our businesses and teach at our universities.

Read more (Paywall): <http://www.theaustralian.com.au/opinion/chinese-australians-deserve-protection-from-beijing/news-story/94cd9075b79d9f71e9dca36cb4837871>

6. Trudeau government urged to follow Australia lead on China

18/12/2017

**Primrose Riordan
The Australian**

Canada has become the latest county to use Australia as a guide on how to deal with rampant foreign influence after a conservative senator said such laws were “essential for Canadian political sovereignty”.

Canadian opposition senator for Ontario Linda Frum has called for Australia's new laws, which were introduced into parliament last week, to be urgently reviewed by her country's parliament.

“It's essential for Canadian political sovereignty that we examine this very, very closely,” Senator Frum said last week. “I think we need to look at it and I think we need to look at it urgently.”

Senator Frum has introduced a private member's bill to broaden existing bans on foreign entities playing a role in the political process.

Read more (Paywall): <http://www.theaustralian.com.au/national-affairs/trudeau-government-urged-to-follow-australia-lead-on-china/news-story/8b81dabd039ea3ce4aba5651f9e7c723>

7. China scare Labor's one success in by-election campaign

18/12/2017

Anthony Klan

The Australian

Labor's "China-phobia" scare campaign appears to have gained some traction in the Bennelong by-election, with the largest swings against the government recorded in areas with the most Chinese voters.

Analysis by *The Australian* reveals that in the northern Sydney suburbs of Eastwood and Carlingford, where 34.5 per cent and 32 per cent of residents respectively are of Chinese ancestry, Labor picked up swings in some booths of 12 per cent or more, on the back of its campaign against the Turnbull government's crackdown on foreign interference in Australian affairs. The proposed new laws provoked an angry backlash from Beijing during the campaign.

Had those swings been replicated across Bennelong, ALP candidate and former NSW premier Kristina Keneally would have been elected to parliament. Liberal incumbent John Alexander, who was forced to a by-election because he held dual citizenship when he was elected, had held the seat by a margin of 9.7 per cent. At the close of counting yesterday, Mr Alexander had recorded a 4.96 per cent swing against him, leaving him with 54.75 per cent of the vote after preferences.

Read more (Paywall): <http://www.theaustralian.com.au/national-affairs/china-scare-labors-one-success-in-byelection-campaign/news-story/36384f903c32e2e6ac91b6ac4afffb63>

8. Australia's Diplomatic Dustup With China Threatens Its Number Two Export Industry: Education

18/12/2017

Salvatore Babones

Forbes

Australia's relationship with its top trading partner, China, is suddenly on the rocks. Echoing the Russian election-meddling scandal in the US, Australia's Prime

Minister Malcolm Turnbull has accused China of interfering in Australian politics as Australian Senator Sam Dastyari has been forced from office over allegations of Chinese influence-peddling. Australia's spy agency, the ASIO, reportedly believes that several Australian politicians have links to Chinese intelligence services.

Turnbull's accusation attracted a sharp rebuke from China, which suggested that Australia's "hysterical paranoia" was "full of racial overtones." The head of the Chinese Navy then accused Australia of jeopardizing regional security with its participation in US-led naval exercises and its condemnation of China's artificial island-building in the South China Sea. China is also angry that Australia hosts a U.S. Marine Corp rapid response force in Darwin, the Australian city that is closest to East Asia's conflict hotspots.

Read more: <https://www.forbes.com/sites/salvatorebabones/2017/12/18/australias-diplomatic-dustup-with-china-threatens-its-number-two-export-industry-education/#2c70ffef64cf>

9. For Clues on How to Address China's Growing Political Influence Strategies, Look to Australia

18/12/2017

Joshua Kurlantzick

Council of Foreign Relations – Asia Unbound

In a relatively short period of time, international media attention—and attention by policymakers—has focused on Beijing's growing efforts to wield influence within democracies' political systems and societies. As I noted in an Expert Brief last week, this attention has been sparked by waves of revelations of Beijing's attempts to wield influence in Australia and New Zealand, as well as growing concerns about similar efforts in Germany, the United States, Canada, and many other developed democracies.

This week, the *Economist* even dedicated its cover story to the issue of China's growing influence strategy, referencing an excellent report by the National Endowment for Democracy on China's "sharp power" strategies in open societies.

In part because Australia was one of the first countries to recognize the challenge of China's expanding global influence campaign inside democracies—a recognition due in part to solid reporting by Australian media outlets—Canberra

also is offering a template for addressing Beijing's influence campaign. For one, Canberra moved relatively quickly to ban foreign donations to political parties and activist groups. Some, but not all, developed nations already have such bans in place; they would be wise to follow Canberra's example and put such policies in place.

Read more: <https://www.cfr.org/blog/clues-how-address-chinas-growing-political-influence-strategies-look-australia>

10. Handling China ties with care

19/12/2017

**Rowan Callick
The Australian**

Australia and China have come a long way together during our 45 years of diplomatic relations — not always in harmony but, when necessary, acknowledging differences and building on the past.

Today, voices are being raised on both sides that we are moving towards some form of irretrievable breakdown as a result of the debate about Chinese influence.

That can't happen. Too much is at stake. But the relationship is changing irrevocably.

China has become the biggest buyer of many of Australia's most important products. And Australia is the largest supplier of crucial drivers of China's economy, including iron ore and liquefied natural gas. Trade has soared 1372 times in those 45 years.

Many links at the personal level are now inextricable.

Read more (Paywall): <http://www.theaustralian.com.au/news/inquirer/handling-china-ties-with-care/news-story/18e7b2f94047e8753e7a1feb399f11b0>

11. Spying Bill in Australia Stirs Fears of Anti-Chinese Backlash

19/12/2017

Damien Cave

New York Times

SYDNEY, Australia — When Craig Chung, an up-and-coming Sydney city councilor, meets with former officials from the United States, neither the media nor his constituents seem to care.

But for events with fellow ethnic Chinese, he errs on the side of caution. He researches the people involved. He sidesteps certain photographs and publicly declares whom he talks to and why — all to ensure he doesn't end up accused of associating with someone tied to the Chinese Communist Party.

"There is this fear that we may work closely with somebody who is accused of being an agent of another government," said Mr. Chung, 49, a fourth-generation Chinese-Australian. "We're in a position now where people are running scared."

Read more: <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/12/19/world/australia/australia-china-backlash-influence.html?mtrref=www.google.com.au>

12. Chinese diplomats warn students in Australia to stay alert to safety risks after spate of attacks

20/12/2017

Laura Zhou

South China Morning Post

The Chinese consulate in Melbourne has warned Chinese students of potential threats to their safety in the wake of a series of attacks.

"Recently, there have been several cases of assaults and attacks against Chinese students in different parts in Australia," the consulate said in a statement posted on its website on Tuesday.

"We remind all Chinese overseas students in Australia to be wary of possible safety risks in Australia," the statement said in Mandarin.

The consulate did not specify any instances of students being targeted but urged anyone who found themselves in a dangerous situation to call the police and report the incident to the embassy or local consulate.

Read more: <http://www.scmp.com/news/china/diplomacy-defence/article/2124905/chinese-diplomats-warn-students-australia-stay-alert>

13. Australian ambassador: Chinese students in Australia make huge contribution to bilateral links

20/12/2017

Xinhua

BEIJING, Dec. 20 (Xinhuanet) -- Since 1972 when China and Australia established the diplomatic relations, the two countries have made huge progress in the field of people-to-people exchanges, said Jan Adams, Australia's ambassador to China. "If you compare those early days in 1972 when we established relations and now, you couldn't believe the progress we have made," the ambassador said in a recent interview with Xinhuanet.

The year of 2017 marks the 45th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between China and Australia.

Australia and China have built many people-to-people connections including students, tourists, and Chinese immigrants to Australia over the periods, the ambassador said.

In 1972, there were about five Chinese students in Australia. And now there are around 160,000 who have made a huge contribution to China-Australia bilateral links, said the ambassador.

[THIS PIECE HAS BEEN TAKEN DOWN FROM XINHUA]

14. US policy may strain China ties

20/12/2017

Brendan Thomas-Noone
The Australian

The Trump administration's first national security strategy, released yesterday, is contradictory in places and ironic in others. Its policy prescriptions, when set against the actions of Donald Trump, are of questionable credibility.

But one consistency is a more hawkish tone towards China, no longer held back to gain co-operation on North Korea. It reveals what has been a growing consensus in Washington for the past several years: that Beijing should be taken more seriously as a geostrategic rival.

If followed through, this policy will likely have significant implications for Australia, as the US aims to expand the areas in which it competes with China. Canberra's balance between our largest economic partner and our leading security ally just got more complicated.

Read more: <http://www.theaustralian.com.au/opinion/us-policy-may-strain-china-ties/news-story/0963a9a3eb674e002d36b43c176eff55>

15. China's embassy in Canberra issues safety warning for Chinese nationals in Australia

20/12/2017

Bill Birtles
ABC News

China's embassy in Canberra has taken the rare step of issuing a public safety warning for Chinese students living in Australia due to "a rising number of insulting incidents".

A notification posted on the embassy website on Sunday reminded Chinese students to increase their safety awareness and listed the phone numbers of consulates around the country.

The statement said recently there has been an increase in "insulting incidents" and assaults against Chinese students in different parts of the country, and

urged students to immediately report any safety problems to the Chinese embassy.

Read more: <http://www.abc.net.au/news/2017-12-20/chinese-embassy-issues-safety-warning-for-australia/9277202>

16. US, Australia face dilemma with China policies

20/12/2017

Ken Moak

Asia Times

The complex and uneasy US-China and Australia-China relationships are about to get more stressful and complicated, given recent developments.

The Australian government has openly accused China of meddling in its political affairs and stealing university research material. In the US, the Congressional-Executive Commission on China held a hearing titled “The Long Arm of China: Exporting Authoritarianism with Chinese Characteristics.”

The US Congress also passed the National Defense Authorization Act, allowing navy ships from Taiwan and United States to visit each other’s ports.

These recent anti-China moves invite the question: Does heightening the rhetoric by the political establishments in Australia and US hurt China or themselves?

Read more: <http://www.atimes.com/us-australia-face-dilemma-china-policies/>

17. The dragon and the kangaroo: 45 years of Australia-China relations

21/12/2017

Kelsey Munro

SBS News

It is 45 years since Australia and China formally established diplomatic relations on December 21, 1972. Since then, China has grown into a global economic giant, lifting an estimated 800 million Chinese people out of poverty and transforming the face of Asia and the Indo-Pacific nations.

The bilateral trade relationship has gone from strength to strength, but the diplomatic relationship between the two nations has been more of a challenge.

At the same time, social interaction between everyday Australians and Chinese people has transformed, led by huge demand from Chinese students to study in Australia, and the two-way tourist trade.

Read more: <https://www.sbs.com.au/news/the-dragon-and-the-kangaroo-45-years-of-australia-china-relations>

18. Fears over Australia's deteriorating relationship with China

21/12/2017

Glenda Korporaal
The Australian

As the Reserve Bank keeps an eye on the slowdown in the Chinese economy, Australian businesses are concerned at the potential economic fallout from the increasing tension in diplomatic relations between the two countries.

Today marks the 45th anniversary of Australian's recognition of China, with an agreement signed by representatives of both countries in Paris in December 1972.

But instead of celebrating a relationship that has been a key driver in Australia's 26 years of uninterrupted economic growth, the mood is marred by political-level accusations against China from the Turnbull government that have provoked strident rebuttals from Beijing.

While China is Australia's largest trading partner, further boosted by news last week that Chinese tourists have spent more than \$10 billion in Australia over the past year, there is concern that political fallout could see China direct more business opportunities to rival suppliers of iron ore, coal, beef, fruit, consumer products as well as tourism and education.

Read more: <http://www.theaustralian.com.au/business/opinion/fears-over-australias-deteriorating-relationship-with-china/news-story/28090f5d2fb6178feeb501add12d3a3d>

19. China-Australia FTA continues to benefit both: official

21/12/2017

Xinhua

CANBERRA, Dec. 21 (Xinhua) -- Two years after it first came into effect, the China-Australia free trade agreement (ChAFTA) is continuing to deliver great benefits to both nations, according to Australia's Trade Minister Steven Ciobo.

Commenting on the success of the ChAFTA in a media release published late Wednesday, Ciobo said exports to China rose to record levels in 2016-2017, with wine and skincare products doing particularly well.

"Removal or reduction of Chinese tariffs has strengthened our export numbers to our largest trading partner - Australia's goods and services exports to China rose 25 percent in 2016-17 to a record 110 billion Australian dollars (84.3 billion U.S. dollars)," Ciobo said.

Read more: http://www.xinhuanet.com/english/2017-12/21/c_136842943.htm