



Benefactor no surprise

January 21 2015

Bob Carr

Dear Sir,

Your *Rear Window* columnist pretends to have a revelation when he writes that the think tank devoted to Australia-China relations (the Australia-China Relations Institute at UTS) receives a contribution from a Chinese benefactor.

Two points need to be made.

One, this was publicly announced when Foreign Minister Julie Bishop launched ACRI on May 16. It was effectively celebrated on the occasion, repeated on at least five other public occasions and confirmed in the institute's brochure published in August last year and on our website.

Second, that we should receive a contribution from a Chinese source when we are devoted specifically to Australia-China relations is about as remarkable as American corporations making big donations to a US studies centre in an Australian university.

What matters for them and for us is the quality of the scholarship we commission from Australian academics, acknowledged and respected by their peers and the reputation of the polling organisations we use. UMR is one of Australia's most respected research companies. It has a wide spectrum of clients both in Australia and overseas in political, corporate and social sectors.

By the way, the fact that 71 percent of Australians want Australia to be neutral in a conflict between China and Japan should surprise nobody. But it is our job to test propositions like it. We will go on doing so.

Yours sincerely,

Bob Carr

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Note: An edited version of this letter was published in *Australian Financial Review*, January 21 2015, p.33