



Malcolm Turnbull and China

On October 5 2011 in a speech to the London School of Economics, Malcolm Turnbull said: **"It makes no sense for America, or its allies, to base long-term strategic policy on the contentious proposition that we are on an inevitable collision course with a militarily aggressive China ... it is important to note that China's growth in power, both economic and military, has not been matched by any expansionist tendencies beyond reuniting Taiwan ... China has more to lose than most from any conflict that disrupts global economic flows".**¹

On November 28 2011 the following remarks were made after President Obama's November 17 speech to the Australian Parliament criticising China; and the November 16 announcement by President Obama and Prime Minister Gillard of the rotation of 2500 US marines annually through the Northern Territory: **"It suits President Obama's domestic agenda to be seen to muscle up to China, even if the additional muscling does not bear too much analysis. But an Australian Government needs to be careful not to allow a doe-eyed fascination with the leader of the free world to distract from the reality that our national interest requires us truly (and not just rhetorically) to maintain both an ally in Washington and a good friend in Beijing".**²

On June 28 2014 Hillary Clinton suggested Australia was putting all its eggs in one basket: China. Turnbull responded: **"I'm sure that we'd love to export vast quantities of iron ore to the United States but they've never shown any enthusiasm in buying them ... To quote Hillary back at herself, she is the one who, referring to how dependent the United States was on Chinese capital to fund the government debt, ... said: how can you argue with your own**

banker? So I think in terms of dependency, I'm not sure that we're really - we really don't need to be concerned about that".³

On September 5 2014 Turnbull commented on the territorial disputes in the East China Sea. His position strongly implied Australian neutrality:

"China has been disputing maritime territories with Japan over the Diaoyu/Senkaku islands and with the ASEAN nations in the South China Sea. I note that I make no judgement at all about the merits of those competing claims. Our interest is simply in their peaceful resolution ...

A real risk is that an incident at sea escalates, drawing in the United States with unpredictable consequences".⁴

On January 31 2015 at the US/Australia Dialogue Turnbull stated:

"China has under President Xi both sought to build stronger ties with countries in the region, including Australia, and at the same time firmly restated China's claim to various islands, reefs and shoals in both the East and South China Seas.

If China's objective is to reduce America's military presence and strategic influence in the region it would be resolving all these disputes swiftly and peacefully with a view to reassuring its neighbours that they had nothing to fear as China's military power comes to match its economic might".⁵

On August 6 2015 Turnbull said: **"It is vitally important for Australians, and Chinese, not to forget that in an epic struggle for the survival of our own nations, our own sovereignty, we were allies. It is important for Americans and Chinese to remember that too".**⁶

¹ Malcom Turnbull, 'Same Bed, Different Dreams – Asia's Rise: A View from Australia', London School of Economics, October 5 2011, <<http://www.malcolmtturnbull.com.au/media/same-bed-different-dreams-asias-rise-a-view-from-australia>>

² Malcom Turnbull, Sir Edward 'Weary' Dunlop Lecture, Launch of PWC/Melbourne Institute AsiaLink Index, November 28 2011 <<http://www.malcolmtturnbull.com.au/media/launch-of-2011-pwc-melbourne-institute-asialink-index-see-more-at-http-webc>>

³ Malcom Turnbull, interview with Michael Stutchbury, ANU Crawford School Forum: 'Global Realities and Domestic Choices', *Australian Financial Review*, July 2 2014

⁴ Malcom Turnbull, 'More than a mine, more than a market - history, empathy, economics in the China relationship', NAB Australia-China Business Week, Sydney, September 5 2014

⁵ Malcom Turnbull, 'Assessing the Future of the Asia-Pacific - US/Australia Dialogue January 31 2015', *ChAFTA and rebalancing of Chinese & Australian economies*, Intercontinental Sydney, August 6 2015