

Comment by Michael C H Jones
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My father always advised me "son, you can swim downstream, you may even from time to time be able to swim across stream, but you will never swim upstream" - unless of course you want to drown! But perhaps like Palestine, the Kurds may ultimately surprise us all?

West Asia is a mess. The US, UK, Australia and others still will not take responsibility for their illegal, immoral and racist invasion of Iraq in 2003. Like the Vietnam invasion of 1965, conservatives in both the Australian Liberal and Labor Parties just cannot accept that their foreign policies led directly to millions of refugees escaping the ravages of war, currently millions into Jordan, Lebanon and Turkey and the consequent overflow into Europe. "Weak-minded" Christian groups now pray and pass around the begging bowl for the crumbs of financial aid. Better that they seriously lobby their politicians, forget the "bombing-mad" Tony Abbott, for at least three outcomes as part of the solution - Russia and China are separate challenges - to the crisis of West Asia:

1) redraw the colonial boundaries of West Asia. As this link states there are approximately 30 million Kurds across Turkey, Syria, Iraq and Iran, perhaps 4/5 times the Jews of Israel and 8 times the Palestinians? Who decides what countries come into existence, and their national boundaries whether Muslim or Christian re Catalonia and Scotland?

2) finally tell the George Bushs, John Howards and Tony Abbotts of this world to take their brand of Christianity and hurt themselves badly, preferably over an eternity down below - the historical hatreds of the Muslim world can only be resolved slowly through UN policies and actions in support of multiculturalism. But above all Western governments/elites must stay out of Muslim territories.

3) make it plain to the fundamentalist Jews wherever that the days of guilt tripping the world because of the Holocaust are over - depending on which sources you read there were 12/17 million people butchered by the Nazis not just 5/6 million predominantly poor Jews, most of the rich had left Germany by 1939. There will never be peace in West Asia until the Jewish State of Israel is dissolved and a secular State of Greater Israel established, Palestine or no Palestine - multiculturalism is inherently democratic and equal opportunity.

Now the other challenges, both increasingly relevant to West Asia, are long-term - the return of China to great power status, and short-term - Russia or rather Putin's refusal to accept the global implications of the collapse of the Soviet Union twenty five years ago. Both in different ways are very threatening for the post World War 2 hegemony of the USA - economic, political, social and cultural.

One of the major bulwarks against western imperialism, financial or otherwise, has been the Muslim religion of whatever sect. Intellectual inroads have been made, however substantial resistance particularly social and cultural remains. Therefore in the long-term how successful will China, and India as well, be in dealing with their substantial Muslim minorities and how will their internal domestic policies impact on diplomatic relations not only with West Asia but also ASEAN re Indonesia and Malaysia?

It has been very clear since 1978 that China used the USA as its model for Great Power status. Put simply the CPC leadership wish to replace America with China as predominant culture, and to succeed in returning China to it's "rightful place" in the world's pecking-order, economic and political power must be achieved. This may or may not occur by the end of the 21st century, however my concern is that the very entrenched neo-conservative mindset throughout the USA might influence policies of war as a better option for "Free Enterprise" survival?

Putin is the short-term challenge for not only America but the world. Admittedly USA policies since the early 1990's have been provocative, clumsy, insulting, and downright stupid towards Russia. And as usual the world has to suffer for US "intemperance". Russia was very nearly brought inside the tent with participation in the G8, and Germany worked very hard on the project despite Polish and Ukrainian intransigence. However the milk was spilt, and we now face a rogue declining great power with very sharp teeth - Ukraine and the Baltic, Syria and West Asia, SCO and BRICS, the Far East and Sea of Japan. Even in the Arctic. The American people at their most jingoistic may support a two-front war, not four or five fronts? Yes Russia would economically disintegrate, but what carnage Putin could cause up to his second designated retirement in 2022?

As for Australia, the joke in political circles is that the first Party to replace its leader, Abbott or Shorten, will win the 2016 Federal Election. Mike Baird for the Liberals and "god knows who" for Labor!!!