

Trump's Warm Relationship with China's President Defies the War-Hawks

by William Jones

Feb. 26—Let them howl! The riffraff of the fake-news media and Washington think-tanks were chewing the rug in rage last week, after the conclusion of President Trump's joint press conference with Australian Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull on Feb. 22. They had wished that the visit of the Australian PM might bring the recalcitrant President on board a tougher policy toward China.

Instead, the President went off script to praise what he called his extraordinary relationship with Chinese President Xi Jinping. While complaining that the Chinese were "killing us on trade," he also made clear that he did not intend to launch any war—even a war of words—against China. "But we've developed a great relationship with China, closer probably than we've ever had," Trump said, "and my personal relationship, as Malcolm can tell you, with President Xi is, I think, quite extraordinary. He's somebody that I like, and I think he likes me. With that being said, he likes China and I like the United States. But a lot of things are happening. It's going to be a very interesting period of time. But we have to straighten—and as much as I like and respect President Xi—we have to straighten [out] the trade imbalance." There may be tough negotiations ahead, but no war against China.

Human beings would have been overjoyed to learn this, but not the fake-news press. A reporter asked about Defense Secretary Mattis' characterization of China as "a revisionist country," a reference which is also included in the recently released National Security Strategy and National Defense Strategy. "As far as General Mattis is concerned," Trump replied, "he has that view, and a lot of people have that view. China's tough; they're getting stronger. They're getting stronger to a large extent from the money they made from having poor leadership in the United States, because the United States leadership has allowed them to get away with murder. With that being said, I think we can have a further great trading relationship with China. Hopefully that's going to work out. And hopefully the relationship I have with



President Trump welcomes China's President Xi Jinping at Mar-a-Lago, April 6, 2017.

President Xi will make that happen. Only time will tell."

Even Australian Prime Minister Turnbull had to "eat crow" when the President said that Turnbull could confirm President Trump's excellent relationship with President Xi. "I can confirm that President Trump and President Xi see eye-to-eye in every respect," Turnbull told reporters, "and it's very clear in the meetings that I have attended in the East Asia Summit and APEC, the respect they have for each other—and I think it's the single most important relationship, between China and the United States. It's clearly very respectful, very frank, very clear-eyed." Turnbull added, "For our own part we see China's rise as being overwhelmingly positive for the region and for the world."

Then he checked himself and went into his usual attack on China, although he moderated its tone. "The critical thing, of course, is that the rule of law be maintained. There are people who want to paint the United States and its allies like Australia as being against China in some sort of rerun of the Cold War. That is not appropriate. That's not accurate. What we need to ensure is the rules of the road, the rule of law, the rules-based system where big countries can't push around little countries." He then added the old standard argument that it was only under this "rule of law" that the countries of the Asia-Pacific have been able to develop.

The truth of the matter is that the Asia Pacific was able to develop because it was useful to the British-steered “Western” powers to have stable regimes that could provide a bulwark against the Soviet Union during the Cold War. Countries such as South Korea and Japan were allowed to deviate from the “rule of law” known as the British free trade system, to adopt Hamiltonian policies and build up their own economies for the purpose of containing communism. When China joined that system after Deng Xiaoping’s “reform and opening up” of 1978, it followed the same path for its own development.

But the “rule of law,” maritime and otherwise, had already been imposed by the British and their Americans puppets after the Second World War. China was one of the victors of that war as well, but, because of its internal turmoil and civil war, and a certain racism in the Anglo-American camp, it had no say in crafting those rules in the Asia-Pacific region or anywhere else. Nor was China even able to reassert its pre-war territorial claims in the South China Sea. The recent provocative intrusions by American, and now possibly by Australian and Japanese vessels, into territory claimed by China in the South China Sea, can only be seen as a continuation of the arbitrary decisions made by the Anglo-American victors at the end of the war.

China is calling for a more inclusive rule of law, not based on Cold War alliances, but rather on the notion of creating a “community of shared future” in the region. China is also focused on eliminating poverty through the great projects of its Belt and Road Initiative infrastructure-building program. And while this program is inclusive and open to all, including the United States, it nevertheless remains a target of the British and of allied U.S. neocons, who feel it undermines the post-war Anglo-American “stewardship” of the Asia-Pacific region.

Will the close personal relationship between President Trump and President Xi actually allow them to overcome the problems in the area of trade, or on other issues? The outlook is good, but obstacles continue to arise. The negotiations on economic issues between the United States and China have not advanced very far since the creation of the Security and Economic Dialogue, one of the four high-level dialogues created by President Trump and President Xi to build closer relations between the two nations. China could certainly reduce the trade deficit of the United States by purchasing more goods from the United States. But what China needs most are high-tech products, generally placed off-limits by the U.S. Export Administration Regulations (EAR). There is a limit to how much beef and soy-

beans China can buy from the United States. Some of the high-tech items China wants are exclusively available from U.S. companies, whereas China can produce its own beef and soybeans if need be. At the same time, China’s tremendous breakthroughs in science and technology during the last few years have provided grist to the mill of those who would like to impose even *more* restrictions on high-tech export to China.

As raging British-controlled neocons struggle to upset the warm relations between the two Presidents, Washington’s CSIS think-tank has just produced a ludicrous Utopian report by Mark Cancian, “Coping With Surprise in Great Power Conflicts.” It reads more like a Tom Clancy thriller than a strategic assessment. Cancian, a veteran of a decade in the Office of Management and Budget, depicts a variety of fanciful dangers, including a Pearl Harbor-like surprise attack on the U.S. homeland by China prior to an invasion of Taiwan, the assassination of a U.S. President, and other ridiculous scenarios. Chinese scholar Guo Xiaobing, in an article in China’s *Global Times*, made the relevant remark that the report appears to be more “mirror-imaging” than reality, given that the type of scenarios depicted by Cancian in that report could have been taken straight out of the CIA’s Cold War playbook. And FBI Director Christopher Wray, who’s FBI ignored the warnings about the Florida school shooter, has issued hyped-up alerts that China is using its students in the United States as spies—which has already raised an outcry against such “profiling” from U.S. universities and Chinese-American organizations.

The contrast between the war-mongering of the Anglophile “political establishment,” and the attitude of the U.S. President could not be greater. Anyone with any sense can understand that the relationship between the United States and China is the most important relationship in the world. And the fact that the two leaders have this “extraordinary relationship,” offers the most hope for the greatest number of people. The Chinese President has put forward the notion of “a community of shared interest for humanity,” and a relationship between nations that is just, inclusive, and non-intrusive into the other country’s internal affairs. The close relationship between the two Presidents must therefore become a collaborative partnership on concrete projects that are of mutual benefit for both countries and for the world. The American electorate, which rejected the candidates—and the policies—of the “political establishment” in electing Donald Trump as President in 2016, deserves no less.