

迎接亞洲動盪年!

從雜誌上看到以下一段的文章，可以說明今天美日聯手遏制中國崛起的心態。

“重大的戰爭之所以爆發，往往是因為一個國家的經濟總量被後來者逐漸趕超之時，雙方對自己的相對軍事力量產生誤判，致使危機升級為戰爭。相反，當力量的對比足夠大到不可能產生誤判時，權利的交接就能和平進行，長遠的趨勢仍然是由經濟實力的相互變化無情地驅動著。一般來說，軍事革新對於那些發展更快的後來者更為有力”。（中國--現代艦船 總484期第27頁）

美國重反亞太，不斷在東海和南海攪亂，以上的一段文章就是最好的說明，估計由2016年到2020年這段時間，美日將會在中國周邊不斷製造紛爭，目的是要阻延中國的崛起，2020年前如無重大意外發生，2020年以後中國羽翼已豐，隨著中國隱型戰機，高超聲速空天飛

~中偉~

機，導彈等核武器反擊力量的完善，美日將不敢對中國再有軍事誤判，在彼消我長的情況下，中國的崛起勢頭將是無法抗拒。

最近中國的軍事大改革，亦是走著文章所提的方向。本來一個國家的經濟總量被後來者逐漸趕超可作為良性競爭，但在國家的層面上，除了有可能失去經濟大國地位外，更會失去世界領導地位，失去經濟大國地位亦會失去金融大國地位，美元地位受到挑戰，意味著國家經濟將會走下坡，軍事投入亦因而減少，國家現今國際地位將會不保，這都是國家間興衰交替時產生的矛盾，希望這些歷史不會重演，所以中國提出的“構建中美新型大國關係”就是互相合作而要避免衝突，互利共贏，看來美國近年的行動，並未接受到這一新構思。

原油價格下跌何時了？動盪的西亞危險的世界

最近一周國際原油價格(Brent Crude Oil)再次猛跌，終於跌破40美元，從2014年六月的峰值每桶115美元下降到2015年12月21日的36.17元，創下2004年來的最低記錄，跌了68.5%。這對於石油進口國和普通美國老百姓都是好事，而對於許多石油出口國卻是災難，對美國國內從事fracking(水壓裂解油頁岩)技術來生產頁岩石油的小公司更是面臨破產的邊緣。國際原油價格的走向不僅關係到世界升斗小民的切身經濟利益，更深刻的影響西亞的局勢和世界的安危。本文從美俄博弈的主軸，伊斯蘭恐怖主義勢力的威脅，以及伊斯蘭遜尼和什葉教派的衝突來探討原油的可能走向。

過去四十多年的歷史告訴我們國際原油的價格與國際地緣政治鬥爭的需要息息相關，此次的巨大波動也不例外。誠然國際原油生產超過需求，然而差距多少？不同的專家在不同的時間有不同的估計，概括講並不大，在1%到3%之間。為何石油輸出國組織(OPEC)國家不減產自救？而最大輸出國沙特反而加大生產以確保供過於求？回顧一下本輪油價暴跌的重要節點和當時的地緣政治大事可以幫助我們瞭解他們之間的關聯。

去年六月油價開始下跌時，

正是烏克蘭新政府上任，並向東部說俄語區域大舉進攻，企圖武力統一東部的時候。然而由於普金的幕後強力支援，“東部民兵”打敗了烏克蘭政府軍的企圖。烏政府的盟友，美國及北約諸國，在戰場上無法屈服俄羅斯，只好在經濟上加大對普金的制裁。由於俄國財政收入極大程度依靠石油輸出來換取外匯，所以將油價做空，從115元跌到九月中期的100元，然而普金態度沒有任何轉變。九月十一日美國國務卿訪問沙特，表面上是共商對付IS的大計，之後油價即開始加速下跌，在2015年二月初跌至50元。其後逐步反彈在三月十五日回到六十美元，從此時到七月十五日期間油價在55元至68元間小幅上下震動。在這段時間，敘利亞局勢基本朝有利於美國及以沙特和土耳其為代表的遜尼派國家集團傾斜，俄國和伊朗所支持的敘利亞的阿薩德什葉政權岌岌可危，超過百萬的中產階級難民湧向西歐。在此背景下，美國所領導的北大西洋組織盟國加大對俄國邊境軍事壓力，而油價也再度下跌，到九月中旬再度低於50元。然而出乎世界的意料，普金以迅雷之勢于九月卅日以強大的海空軍力量出兵敘利亞並在一個月的期間扭轉敘利亞局勢，打擊了美國，土耳其和沙特支持的反阿薩德政權的民

~張文基~

兵組織，也摧毀了IS的設施和它運輸廉價原油的管道和車輛，嚴重傷害了土耳其的野心和利益。十一月十三日巴黎發生傷亡500人的恐怖襲擊事件，促使西歐各國，特別是法國改變對敘利亞的政策，全力打擊IS。法總統奧朗德于十一月廿四日訪問美國希望促成美俄合作共同加大摧毀IS，而就在同一天土耳其F16在土敘邊境擊落俄國蘇24戰機，也打破了法國的企圖。就在十一月中旬油價開始新一輪的暴跌從50元跌到今天的36元。

油價的迅速下降是美國和沙特主導的，因此油價的能否回歸正常水準取決於美俄關係是否能夠緩和下來，而這又最終取決於美俄能否在敘利亞和摧毀IS問題上是否可以達成能令遜尼派和什葉派兩個國家集團都滿意的方案。而這方案必定是政治解決。最近美國開始不再強調敘利亞總統阿薩德須先下臺才能啟動政治解決的步伐是一個好的徵兆。油價不可能長期低迷，因為俄羅斯不可能承受得起長期的低於30元的油價。如果逼急了普金，他可能會讓各種手段打擊沙特的油田讓油價迅速上升。走到那一步時不僅是西亞的災難也將是沒有人願意見到的世界性的災難。

馬政府卸任前之反思

2010-9-20網上留傳過，蘭德智庫「馬英九的歷史定位是無能」；「馬英九不是好總統」，上自有「聖人」之稱的王建煊，下至高雄監獄獄持事件主謀的大哥，均對馬政府的施政表示不滿，這種評價其中 有幾分有事實根據？有幾分是人云亦云？如果以他團隊的政績與「前朝」及與其他國家相較，其成果也許有些出人意料。先從國內來看：

自馬總統上任以來全國刑案、竊盜案及電話詐騙案均大幅下降，治安狀況達到20年來犯罪率最低，破案率最高的成績【1】。2014年全球最安全國家，台灣為第2名【2】。

喧騰了多年而無法推動的軍公教課稅，於101年實施。

加強取締酒駕，去年酒駕致死人數較上年減少百分之三十。

完成延宕多年之「台日漁業協定」，漁民作業範圍擴大1400海里。

台灣人民出國免簽證國於「前朝」執政期間，了無進展，現已達140個國家。

推動兩岸直航，開放陸客自由，自2008年以來，來台觀光客數目成長超過百分之百，去年觀光之外匯收入約新台幣四千億元【3】。

自簽定「ECFA」後，兩岸貿易持續成長，去年我對陸順差超過一千億美元。

再將台灣置於世界座標中來檢視台灣的經濟狀況：台灣的能源需進口，但家庭電價是世界最低的國家之一【4】。電力取得指標，為全球第二名【5】。

積極推動雲端運算環境等之措施，去年「知識經濟指數」，在亞洲排名第一，較亞洲平均值高出兩倍以上【6】。

~何崇嫩~

2014年「環境風險評估報告」，台灣投資環境自2008年以來，排名逐步上升，2013躍居全球第三、亞洲第二【7】。台灣的「人均國內生產總值」以購買力評價指數比較，2007年為全球第35名。馬上任以來逐年上升，目前超越法、英、義大利、歐盟平均、日、韓等，為第20名【8】。換言之，台灣居民，生活水準相對而言，要優於上述各國。

「2014年世界經濟自由度排名」【9】，台灣排名第14，為歷年最高。

根據「IMD世界競爭力年報」，台灣的競爭力在世界的排名2008年為17名，自2010年以來，逐年的名次，依序是8，6，7，11，13【10】。

今年三月彭博商業網站公布全球經濟體幸福程度，台灣排第五【11】。

要說馬政府政績斐然並不為過，且看每逢週末假期，全台景區處處塞車，百貨賣場人潮洶湧，高檔餐廳一位難求，民眾日子過得應該不錯。但他常被批評為「無能」，民調又低，其原因也許要由近年來發生的一些事件來探討：

國會議長與黨團總召涉嫌司法關說一案，引發中華傳統文化下重視「情面」、「關係」，與現代民主體制下重視「理性」、「法治」觀念的正面衝撞。馬總統的理性思維與傳統價值觀的格格不入，因之兩位關說當事人全身而退，馬反是傷痕累累。

再看洪仲秋、太陽花及反服貿等事件，其相同之處均是大部分參於抗爭的群眾無暇深究事實真相，但經過媒體，名嘴炒作，網路散播，這股力量被在野黨巧妙利用，有效動員族群，累積成了一股對政府怨懣的強大動能，在九合一選舉中發揮舉足輕重的作用，執政黨遭遇空前之挫敗。

馬的不沾鍋特性，不善或不屑使用恩威並用的手腕，縮限了總統職權。他團隊的文宣，溝通與行銷無法「令人有感」。他既不能籠絡人心，更無法引領民意。媒體、名嘴與政客批評他的成群結隊，替他說話的甚是罕見。做得好的被低調抹煞，做得不好的被刻意放大，久而久之，眾口鑠金，造成「政府無能，民眾無感」的定調，因之他不錯的政績，非且不能轉化為選票，且與民意有如此大的落差。這只怕是他執政的最大敗筆。

倘若政績無用，選舉文化成為市場行銷導向，選民輕信網路流言，愛看政治秀來投票，只怕民選官員今後以做秀為專業。人氣最高的柯文哲有言：「老百姓的水準就是這樣的」。真若如此，台灣的榮景只怕是難以持久。

如果你以為在去年底九合一選舉中，你已經以選票或棄選教訓了執政黨，也許你該再想一想：這樣做，受傷害的可能是台灣的前途及你我的未來。

【1】 <http://zh.wikipedia.org/zh-tw/%E9%A6%AC%E8%8B%B1%E4%B9%9D>

【2】 <http://www.therichest.com/rich-list/rich-countries/top-10-safest-countries>

【3】同【1】

【4】 <http://www.iea.nl>

【5】「Doing business 2015」
http://www.eia.gov/countries/prices/electricity_households.cfm

【6】 <http://www.adb.org/publications/innovative-asia-advancing-knowledge-based-economy-next-policy-agenda>

【7】 <http://www.beri.com>

【8】 <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/rankorder>

【9】 <http://www.heritage.org/index/ranking>

【10】 http://www.imd.org/uupload/IMD.WebSite/wcc/WCYResults/1/scoreboard_2014.pdf

【11】 <http://www.bloomberg.com/>

The World Will Be Better Off in 2016 And Possibly Beyond

Mainstream and Organic View!
Dr. Wordman

The title of this column is a bold prediction, but I have some good reasons to stand behind it. World affairs are not easily predictable, however, matters can only get better or get worse, a fifty to fifty probability with no data analysis. When I was considering writing a column to kick off the 2016 New Year, I began to review the major news about international affairs in 2015, especially news about the world leaders. I came away with some statistics about the world leaders' travelling record in 2015 that stroke a chord in my mind which tilted the 50:50 probability of future outlook of the world to a more positive picture as we enter into the New Year. Before I tell you in the following why I stick my neck out to say The World Will Be Better Off in 2016 And Possibly Beyond, let me first wish you, my readers, with a bit of confidence, A Happy New Year!

No doubt peace is not on the entire Earth. The turmoil in 2015 was ominous enough to spell continued trouble in 2016. Will the world get worse than 2015? Let's do a brief review and a guarded assessment on each troubled area or issue then cast my optimistic view based on a simple reason which I will reveal at the end of this article.

The annexation of Crimea by Russia is certainly troublesome to the U.S. and NATO. The doubling down of Russian involvement in Syria of course does not simplify the Middle East situation. The ISIS's stay and expansion strategy and the increased terrorists-activities highlighted by the Paris bombing and San Bernardino killing heightens the tension in the Middle East and worldwide. But these developments also have created complex dynamics that offer opportunities for the stakeholders to ponder. The refugees forced out of the Middle East and potential more terrorists attacks have induced a hidden desire for the power players to collaborate in containing the ME crisis, to tame the terrorists' and to avoid Islamic social unrest spreading elsewhere in the world. A new sanction against Russia executed differently may just get Russia to temper her behavior for the better in 2016. The Iraq and Afghanistan may also move to more stability as an Afghanistan-Pakistan-US-China conference is brewing to take place in 2016.

On the nuclear threat, Iran may meet the terms with a roll-back of sanctions. North Korea may be still unpredictable but most likely no one will pay more attention to her. South Korea has improved her relation with China bonded by their trade and shared perspective on history as the two presidents reviewed the 70th WW II Anniversary military parade together on Tian-An-Men. The recent admission of the 'comfort women' issue by the Japanese Prime Minister Abe Shinzo is a good sign of Japan

to tone down her militaristic foreign policy. Abe formally and officially apologized to the South Koreans and promised to set up a fund for compensating the 'comfort women' victimized by the Imperial Japanese Army. The international efforts condemning the Japanese Imperial Army on the 'comfort women' issue finally began to pay off.

South China Sea has become a new hot spot in 2015. China has persisted in her claims regarding the disputed islands in the South China Sea and also increased effort in infrastructure construction on her islands with the same goal of maintaining freedom of navigation in the South China Sea so declared by the U.S. There was never any trouble in maritime traffic in the South China Sea region, thus any presence of external naval powers cannot be justified based on maritime security concern. China will continue her island construction unless stopped by force. However, no one would want to use force for lack of justification, hence, ASEAN and China will, most likely, develop a code of conduct for the South China Sea to dose out any flare there.

From the Greece debt crisis to China stock market plunge, it does spell uncertainty for the global economy. However, the U.S. economy is gaining stability and strength with a reasonable good outlook for 2016. Although there is competition and maneuver in the international currency war, there is no advantage to anyone to see China collapsing in her economy. The efforts China is pushing on the "One Belt and One Road" are principally accepted by the Eurasian world anticipating a positive impact on the world economy. Accepting the Chinese RMB as the fifth currency into the special drawing rights (SDR) in the IMF currency reserve basket has more positive effects for the economic growth of the world as recognized by UK and Germany. The U.S. and Japan probably will make appropriate adjustment in policies to participate in the Eurasian investment arena for their own benefits. The competition in infrastructure development, for example in the rival of building high speed rails between China and Japan, is a healthy situation for Asia and beyond.

Cyber crisis and Internet management have evolved into an international concern after Snowden's disclosure on snooping in the name of national security. However, the movement of prevention of cyber surveillance initiated post Snowden may get rolled back and

reassessed since the terrorists' activities intensified in 2015. Evidence shows that the terrorist plots are fostered in and facilitated by the Internet; this raises the need for nations to examine the national boundary issue with Internet and its management. Facing common threat from terrorists, perhaps, there would be incentive for countries to cooperate in reducing cyber hacking and attack in 2016 and beyond.

The above review of the past and assessment for the future are definitely carrying an optimistic tone. As promised, I will now reveal my reason for being somewhat optimistic towards the future. The basic reason is surprisingly simple; it is based on the world leaders' work agenda, noticeable through the travels and visits they made to foreign countries. The head of states do not make a foreign trip lightly. They do so for the following purposes: 1. Policy Announcement (such as China's One Belt and One Road Blue Print), 2. Business Deals and Commerce (such as bilateral and multilateral investment and trade), 3. Joint Statement (such as to clarify policy), 4. Alliances or Agreements (such as military or maritime) and 5. Seeking Support and Understanding (such as cultural exchange and improving friendship). These objectives tend to produce positive impact to international relations. The more diligently the world leaders are pursuing the above agenda through foreign visits the better will be the outlook of the world.

In 2015, most of the important world leaders made diligent and frequent effort in travelling and visiting foreign countries. The U.S. President Obama made 11 trips in 2015 (he had made 49 trips visited 52 countries during his two-term tenure to-date). China's President, Xi Jinping, visited 14 countries in 2015 making him the most travelled Chinese leader since 1949. (In contrast, his predecessor, Hu Jintao, only made seven trips in his ten year tenure as the head of the State) Vladimir Putin, Russian President, also made 14 trips to foreign countries. The UK Prime Minister David Cameron made 47 trips as of 3/2014 and French President, Francois Hollande, made 50 trips in 2015. Narendra Modi, Prime Minister of India, as of December 2015, has made thirty-seven foreign trips on five continents. (9 in 2014) Even Abe with low rating at home with his Abenomics had made 49 trips in 20 months, making business deals, seeking support for Japan and following China's footsteps to central Asia countries.

These world leaders' trips and mutual interaction will generally produce positive effects barring secret negotiations leading to war plots. Obama missing at the 2013 APEC realized how important it is to attend the 2014 APEC; he then reached agreement with Xi on weather exchange and protocol on air encounter; later Xi's state visit to the U.S. produced an order of 300 Boeing planes are clear example of the positive effects of these foreign visits. Based on the world leaders' busy travel agenda, I dare say that The World Will Be Better Off in 2016 And Possibly Beyond. Happy New Year to You!