

Letter to the Editor

November 14 2017

This Letter to the Editor was published in [The Sydney Morning Herald](#) on November 14 2017.

Publishers routinely require an author to back up any allegations with evidence. This should not be such a trauma to Hamilton. The recent "China panic" stories fall woefully short of an evidentiary base. For example, Nick McKenzie alleged in June that the Chinese government was capturing Australian politics through campaign donations. In response, I pointed out there were over 300 Chinese companies in Australia. He had produced evidence of donations from two businessmen, one of whom had been an Australian citizen for 20 years.

Similarly, there have been sensational headlines about Chinese students pushing a pro-Chinese line. My colleague, Professor James Laurenceson, pointed out there are 131,082 Chinese students in Australia. There have been four reported incidents and none involved a threat to freedom of expression.

The real issue is where legitimate concern about Australian sovereignty fades into a "China panic" tinged with xenophobia.

McKenzie repeats the point that Xiangmo Huang donated to the University of Technology Sydney to facilitate the establishment of the Australia-China Relations Institute (ACRI) but since last year ACRI's operational costs have been fully funded by the university.

Bob Carr
Director, Australia-China Relations Institute, University of Technology Sydney