

Not for Donald Trump the tired ways of business as usual

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The combination of warnings of inevitable and imminent Armageddon, drifting into outright foaming hysteria, and more general impressively mindless stupidity over Donald Trump's tariff play was surely a wonder to behold.

All one can note is that it has been ever thus — ever, that is, since Trump announced his candidacy, with it all stepping up a hysterical notch after Hillary Clinton lost the most unlosable election since John Hewson in 1993.

A comparison, which was given added piquancy yesterday by the winner of the 1993 unwinnable, Paul Keating, praising the foreign policy of his fellow unwinnable winner — surely one of the more egregious exercises we have seen in recent times of farting in the Church of Fatuously Pompous Correctness.

Back in November 2016, all the “right-thinking clever people” saw global financial markets plunging on the election of Trump. The cleverest right-thinking idiot of them all, Nobel prizewinner Paul Krugman, proclaimed that markets would “never recover”.

Sixteen months later and with the Dow just shy of 40 per cent and perhaps a “half-a-dozen Australian economies” higher in value (and that's after January's mini-plunge) — I'd venture to suggest that ranks as at least “a recovery” — they were at it, again predicting collapse, this week after Trump's tariff tirade.

In fact, Wall Street yawned: the Dow went down (a relatively minuscule) 80 or so points, then snapped back just under 100 the next day and as of late yesterday was heading for a flat opening to finish the week.

After, I might note, Trump had turned tariff threat into actuality — but an “actuality” the “Trump disbelievers” are incapable of comprehending. Along with a religious fixation on the purity of free trade, but a purity that is seen entirely and simple-mindedly only in terms of tariffs.

“Trump disbelievers”? My tag for all those — in the Australian context, from the Prime Minister down through all the right-thinking business (BHP CEO Andrew Mackenzie thrust himself forward this week), academic and commentariat elites — who refuse to accept, far less understand and engage with, the consequences of the fact Trump won the election.

That the person in the White House is not Clinton with a face mask and a comb-over. That he will not behave like a President Clinton would (interesting to see that the said PK understands, and indeed applauds, the difference) or indeed that of any modern “conventional” president.

You just don’t slash the corporate tax rate from 35 to 21 per cent without an extended (Henry?) tax review. This president did.

You don’t pull out of a major multinational trade grouping, the TPP. Even more of a no-no — so much of a no-no, it is beyond the realm of human comprehension — you don’t pull out of a global agreement to fine tune (with a small-f, for fail) the Climate with a capital-C. This president did the first and has all but done the second.

And you don’t trample on the pieties of free trade that have underwritten the global elite consensus, even though the Europeans, the Chinese and the Japanese, most prominently, have always made a complete mockery of them.

Their idea of “free trade” is that America opens its markets unreservedly and totally to them, while they have all the non-tariff barriers they can devise to pick and choose what they allow to be “traded” into their economies, to their perceived benefit.

Well, what do you know, this president will play them at their own game. Not for him the “polite processes”, the endless conferencing, the polite and pointless “interventions” in meetings, the talking points, the reservations, the pre-prepared “agreements” and all the rest of the geo-bureaucratic rubbish.

Suddenly we have a US president who plays it like a real estate deal.

Now one can legitimately take issue with his style, his tactics and the substance, but what is inexcusable is trying to wish it away. Oh why doesn’t he behave like a President Clinton? So, let’s assume he will, eventually.

For example, she also told her — left-wing — base that she’d pull the US out of the TPP. The “right-thinking” elites knew that if she’d won, she wouldn’t have. The Washington-Wall Street policy establishment — more accurately described as the self-serving, self-enriching swamp — would have managed it away.

Lifetime Goldman Sachs self-enriched (Gary Cohn) resigns as Trump’s economic adviser because Trump moves to make exactly the sort of negotiating play that was intrinsic to his candidacy, and we are supposed to recoil in horror.

Do these idiots have any sense of self-awareness? Self-evidently, the answer's a resounding no.

As for self-awareness, BHP's Mackenzie called Trump's tariff move a "black day" for the world. You want a real black day for the world economy? You want real damage to the world economy, to the prosperity and growth that has underwritten not just the developed world but the developing world?

I give you the idiotic and pointlessly — developed economy — self-destructive policies to force up the price of electricity and seriously reduce its availability and reliability, in the fatuous pursuit of saving the planet from global warming. Sorry "climate change".

There's a seamless parallel between the hysteria over Trump's tariff move and the so-called climate action consensus.

Tariffs are an absolute no-no, even as a negotiating tactic. But rigging the game for China, Europe, etc, to get access while denying it to naive "free-traders" is just fine.

Australia, the US (pre-Trump) and anyone else stupid enough to buy the climate nonsense have to close their cheap and reliable coal-fired power stations, while China and India open more and more of them and happily sell us useless wind turbines and solar panels.

Oh, wouldn't it be lovely to see China putting its money where Mackenzie's mouth is: to switch from buying Australian coal — both sorts, coking coal pumps just as much CO₂ as energy coal — to the US, African and other sources; to save all who work at BHP from sinning against Gaia?