

Remarks to the Ohio delegation to the Republican Convention

The Hon Joe Hockey

Ambassador of Australia to the United States

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Thank you so much Treasurer.

And I say treasurer because up until about 8 months ago I was the Treasurer of Australia. And as Treasurer of Australia I chaired the G20, which is the premier global economic forum for world leaders and finance ministers. So I don't know whether to congratulate Josh or to commiserate with the job that he has - to try and oversee the finances of the state.

To you Senator, what a great honour it is for me too - as a new ambassador - to be able to address to you and the Ohio delegation to the Republican Convention. Ohio exports around \$800 million a year in goods to Australia: car parts, pharmaceuticals, aeronautical services - and what do we send in return? Two basketballers for the Cavaliers. You probably think that's a fair trade. I'm glad this is not being broadcast back in Australia.

The relationship between Australia and the United States is very deep, and its enduring. Our continents are basically the same size. The continental United States and the continent of Australia are basically the same size, except you have a population of 350 million and we have a population of around 25 million, so we have a lot of empty space. But we have shared values that go back a very long way.

I just want to take the opportunity to remind you of how great America is and how enduring the relationship is between Australia and the United States.

On the 8th of January 1918 Woodrow Wilson went to your Congress and he laid down a 14 point plan, the basis upon which the United States would engage with the world. You had had a horrendous civil war, fighting for values and for your nation. For a long time you were in a period of isolationism, stepping back from the world. And when Woodrow Wilson said "we will engage with the world, but on these terms" that 14 point plan became the basis of what made America great.

Article 2 was freedom of navigation in the seas, and that is important today, particularly in the South China Sea, as it ever has been: freedom of navigation. Article 3 - equality of trade. Freedom to trade around the world without taxes, without regulation. The opportunity to compete. And when he laid down that 14 point plan, including freedom of navigation and freedom of trade, he said "this will make America great, this is the basis

upon which we are prepared to lead the world in peace.” Those values endure today as they did then.

Just a few months after he gave the speech, Australia had by that time suffered massive casualties in World War One. We were a long long way from Europe. A long way. But at that stage we had almost the highest casualty rate per capita in the world, fighting in another country for the values that we believed to be true.

And our lead general, General John Monash, a Jewish general, was asked by the leader of the British 4th Command in May of 1918 to take the town of Hamel from the Germans. He said “I haven’t got enough soldiers left.” The Commander of the British army said I’ll send you some of these new American troops, but they need to be trained. And the American troops trained side by side with the Australians. Ten companies. They formed what we call “mateship,” a bond of shared values, shared beliefs. As the approach came to taking Hamel, U.S. General Pershing said, “I’m sorry we don’t fight under other generals.” The American troops who had formed that mateship and said “well then they can change our uniforms to stand by these guys we kinda like.” So General Pershing gave in and gave us three companies. Out of deference to the Americans our general said that we will not attack until the 4th of July, 1918. In 93 minutes he took the town of Hamel and turned the First World War.

Australia is the only country on earth to have fought with the United States in every other major battle since the 4th of July, 1918. And on the day that those planes went into the World Trade Center, as an example of that, for the first time, the treaty between Australia and the United States was invoked by our Prime Minister, immediately. And we were the first country on earth to say we were in the battle next to you, and we will be by your side. And as of today we have troops in Iraq, troops in Afghanistan, planes over Syria.

And we don’t do so because you’re the big brother, we do so because we share values. The values that Wilson talked about. About freedom, about enterprise, about family. You know when I was hearing the invocation a little earlier I reflected on that fact that St. Peter was a reluctant apostle. Sometimes he just didn’t want to be the leader. Every country on earth that has sought to be the greatest on earth has done so by invading other countries.

The United States is unique, you’re not invading other countries, other countries want to come with you. And yes, it is a burden of leadership, and yes it can be hard, and yes you have ferocious internal political battles, but your values are desired by the whole world.

And even though there are countries that have leadership where people don’t seem to desire your values, be it in North Korea or Russia, I want to assure you that the rest of the world wants to share your values of freedom, democracy and enterprise and family. That’s why there’s a gravitational pull to the United States, that’s why people want to

immigrate here. That's why refugees want to come here. That why people want to engage with you.

I live in the fastest growing region in the world. We have seen nearly 500 million people move into the middle class in Asia over the past 20 years. We've seen massive growth. So by the middle of this century China, India and Indonesia will be in the top 5 or 6 economies in the world.

America will still be there. America will still be strong. I want you to believe in yourselves, as much as I and the rest of the world believe in you as well.

My American friends say to me "oh God, what's happening in this election? We've never seen anything like it." I actually have great faith in your democracy. You know what, there is no other country on earth where the candidate, to be the leader, has to go to every little school hall where everyone goes and stands in the corner to work out who is going to be their candidate. Then it goes from the school hall to the county, and then from the county to the state, and then it goes to a larger national forum. That is democracy at work.

No other country on earth has that, just for choosing the candidate. And the scrutiny - all the media and all the world, of individuals, beyond the capacity of one person.

But your democracy is vibrant, it is strong, but you know what? It's a model, and it's a model because it does, at the end of the day, work. So I have faith in you, great faith in you. And we'll have disagreements with the United States from time to time, but the one thing that I want you to know, the one thing I want to say to you as an outsider looking in, America was great, America is great.

You're the greatest economy on earth, the greatest democracy on earth, you've got the greatest military on earth - as of today America is still great.

You can be better, sure you can. No doubt about that. And your aspiration to be better says everything about how strong your country is - so long as you stand by your values, so long as you don't create doubt about your values, you will be a great nation.

Others will gravitate to you. If you start to doubt whether freedom is right or democracy is right or enterprise is right or free trade is right, or if you start to doubt that immigration is right, all of the sudden you will see the gravitational pull of the world turn elsewhere. And we don't want that - because your values and our values are not just shared in joint words, they are shared in joint blood.

There are a 150,000 dead American soldiers buried in the sand between Australia and Japan. For us, that is an intergenerational debt. But it also symbolizes the fact that when it comes to mateship, the bond endures, the value endures, they go beyond the generations. And for so long as we have breath in our lungs we will be a great mate to the United States of America.