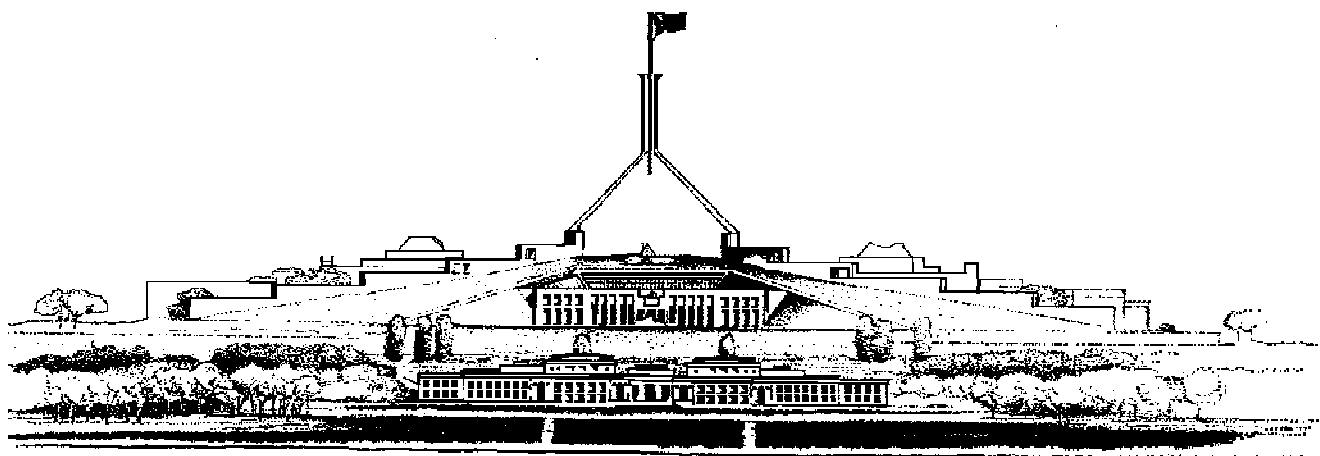




COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA
PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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Wednesday, 20 November 1996

At 4.07 p.m.

Mr SPEAKER (Hon. R. G. Halverson OBE) and the **President of the Senate (Senator the Hon. Margaret Reid)** were announced by the Sergeant-at-Arms, and entered the chamber.

Mr SPEAKER took the chair, and read prayers.

WELCOME TO SENATORS

Mr SPEAKER—On behalf of the House, I welcome the President of the Senate and honourable senators to this meeting of the House of Representatives and the Senate in this chamber to hear the address by the President of the United States of America, the Honourable William Jefferson Clinton.

ADDRESS BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

The Honourable William Jefferson Clinton having been announced and escorted into the chamber—

Mr HOWARD (Bennelong—Prime Minister) (4.10 p.m.)—Mr Speaker, Madam President, this is only the second time in the history of this parliament that the two houses have sat together to hear an address from a visiting head of state or visiting head of government. That circumstance itself is a token of the particular esteem in which the office of the Presidency of the United States of America is held by the Australian people, and it is also a markedly special relationship that exists between our two countries.

Mr President, when the six colonies of Australia federated in 1901 to form the Commonwealth of Australia, we adopted a Westminster system of parliamentary government. But we borrowed extensively from the United States of America in relation to our other constitutional forms. We named our lower house the House of Representatives and our upper house the Senate, after the pattern of your country. We decided to assign specific powers to the central government with the

residue to the state governments, after the pattern of your country. We borrowed heavily on your federal experience. The history of Australia from the parliamentary point of view has been that mixture. But out of that amalgam of British and American tracts has emerged a distinctive and characteristic Australian parliamentary democracy. It has been an echo of the aspirations of the Australian people over the long years since Federation.

There are only a very small number of countries which have continuously been democratic through the 20th century. The United States of America and Australia are two of that small and very select number of nations. For that reason, above many other reasons, your presence here today is warmly received, warmly welcomed and warmly applauded by all of the Australian people, irrespective of their political beliefs. It is rare indeed that we have an assembly of all members and senators across the party divide un-animously to welcome the leader of a great nation, a nation which has led the cause of freedom and the battle for freedom and the values we all share in common over such a long period of time.

We both belong to a robust democratic tradition. We both belong to nations that believe in individual liberty, believe in personal values, believe in the freedom of the press, believe in the separation of the judiciary from the legislative and the executive. For all of those reasons, and many others, you are indeed a very welcome guest.

I hope, Mr President, that your time here in Canberra is one that you remember fondly. We certainly will. I hope both you and Mrs Clinton enjoy your time and carry with you a special recollection of your addressing this joint sitting of the parliament of the Australian people.

Mr BEAZLEY (Brand—Leader of the Opposition) (4.12 p.m.)—Mr Speaker, Mr President, Madam President, honourable members and senators: Mr President, you are most welcome on this historic occasion—as the Prime Minister (Mr Howard) pointed out, one of only a couple—and we are very proud to be here with you. I should say that there

are more than simply the government and opposition represented here. There are a number of Independent members and also members of two other political parties, the Greens and the Australian Democrats. This is a great gathering of all Australian opinion to hear you in this place, and no better forum than this.

George Schultz once said to me, 'How could anybody spend \$1 billion on a building?' We took him through the building and he worked out how we managed to spend it. It is a place of which we are enormously proud and is a great symbol of our nation and the unity of our nation and the hopes and aspirations of our people. It has within it a very specific Australian design.

It is of course not the first time—your visit here or the visit of your predecessor George Bush—that there has been the involvement of the United States in our parliamentary process, and I think it is useful to reflect on that. Throughout World War II we did have a number of parliamentary briefings given by General Douglas MacArthur, who is a man whose name rings in the halls of fame of this nation and a name that is remembered with gratitude. This brings to mind the fact that we ought to in this place appreciate through yourself the role of your nation over the last 50 years or so of international history.

You now preside over a nation which has produced probably the most unselfish gesture that any nation has in recorded history—that is, your people have been prepared to lay themselves on the line when they could have been secure in isolation and to risk for themselves nuclear devastation on behalf of their friends. It ought not go unrecorded that we do appreciate that.

It should be said that that sat lightly on this country because I do not think we have ever been in recent times likely to have enemies that would cause the United States to risk that nuclear devastation in assisting us. Nevertheless, we have thought it important for ourselves to play a part in that. I have often argued, particularly when I was the Minister for Defence, that we have never been con-

sumers of American security except in that one period.

I also like to point out to my American colleagues that General Douglas MacArthur had more Australian troops under his command until late 1943 than American. His great victories early in the war in New Guinea were fought substantially with Australian troops. He set that matter at rest and changed the ratios in the Philippines. But, until that point in time, there had been a very substantial contribution. We have made our contribution over those years, too.

We very much appreciate the remarks I heard you make in your press conference—that you had praise for the Australian government and successive Australian governments for the role they now wish to play in removing from the American people and the world that terrible obligation. Your praise for the role of our government recently in the comprehensive test ban arrangement was very welcome on all sides of politics here, as is your commitment to ensuring that your people and the world generally have that horror removed from them.

You have been a man who has exercised leadership in this region—whose leadership we all count on. You go from here with our Prime Minister to APEC—a forum the leadership component of which you had so much to do with in initiating. That forum is now broadening its wings from simply a consideration of economic matters, critical as those are, to broader regional considerations.

We have always sought American engagement in this region. We have never always agreed with you on the things that you have chosen to do in that time, but we have always sought it because we have always believed that at the end of the day the values we share are the same. Those values are decent human values. Those values are egalitarian values that recognise the rights of all people of all backgrounds. Those values are values which at the end of the day ensure world peace and ensure decent living standards. So it is a privilege for me to stand here today on behalf my party to welcome you.

Mr SPEAKER—Mr President, your address today to members and senators in this chamber is a significant occasion in the history of our federal parliament in this great nation of ours and for the people of Australia. It gives me great pleasure to invite you to address assembled senators and members.

Whereupon honourable members and honourable senators rose in their places and applauded.

The HONOURABLE WILLIAM JEFFERSON CLINTON—Mr Prime Minister, Mr Speaker, Madam President of the Senate, Leader of the Opposition, all the members of the Senate and House of Representatives, and ladies and gentlemen here assembled: let me begin, Prime Minister, by thanking you and the people of Canberra and all of Australia for the absolutely tremendous welcome that Hillary, I and the entire American delegation have received. I know this is called the land down under, but after only a day we all feel like we are on top of the world, and I thank you for that.

I appreciate the opportunity to speak to you in this great hall of democracy. Your Prime Minister Sir Robert Menzies was one of the very few world leaders to address our United States Congress twice. I give you that fact as a point of interest not as a pitch for a return engagement here!

Forty-one years ago this year he said to our people:

We have with your great country as a result of war as well as of peace a tie which I believe to be unbreakable and a degree of affectionate simple understanding which I do not believe can be surpassed between any two countries of the world.

Today, 41 years later, the Prime Minister's insight still holds. The ties between us span more than 200 years. In 1792 an American ship—named, for brotherhood, the *Philadelphia*—arrived at Port Jackson with supplies that helped to save the colonists from starvation. Former Prime Minister Fraser noted that the beef that the *Philadelphia* carried had been on board for nine months—'well cured' he called it.

Well, my friends, two centuries later, our friendship, tested in war and seasoned in peace, has also become well cured. Our people have built bridges of commerce and culture, friendship and trust, reaching over the greatest expanse of ocean on earth. The United States is proud to be Australia's largest foreign investor and largest trading partner. We are also proud of the wars we have fought together and the peace we have fought to sustain together.

The great diversity of our ties was born of shared experience and common values. Our pioneers both settled vast frontiers and built free nations across entire continents. In one another, I really believe we see a distant mirror of our better selves: reflections of liberty and decency, of openness and vitality.

In this century, our bonds have truly been forged in the fires of wars—war after war after war. Together we carried liberty's torch in the darkest nights of the 20th century. My message to you today is that we must embrace the dawn of this new century together and we must make the most of it together. We carried a torch through the night; now we can create the dawn our children deserve.

For Australia's strength and sacrifice through these many struggles, for your fierce love of liberty and your unfailing friendship to the United States, the American people thank you. And the American people look forward with you to this new era of freedom and possibilities. After all, our nations are at peace; our economies are strong; the ideas we have struggled for—freedom of religion, speech and assembly, open markets, tolerance—are more and more the habits of all humanity.

For the first time in all history, two-thirds of all the nations on this earth and more than half the people alive today are ruled by governments picked by their own people. The rigid blocks and barriers that too long defined the world are giving way to an era of breathtaking expansion of information technology and information. And because of these things we now have a chance, greater than any generation of people who ever lived before us, to give more and more people the oppor-

tunity to realise their God-given potential to live their own dreams, not someone else's plan.

But this chance we have is nothing more than that. It is a chance, not a guarantee. For all its promise, we know that this new century will not be free of peril and therefore we know that our freedom still requires our responsibility. Nations and peoples still will be tempted to fight wars for territory or out of ethnic, religious or racial hatred.

As I told the American people over and over again during the recent election campaign, it was literally heartbreaking to me to think of how much of their time I had to spend dealing with people who still believe it is all right to murder each other and each other's children because of their racial, their religious, their ethnic, their tribal differences. We must stand against that, and the example of how we live together must be a rebuke to that in the 21st century.

Make no mistake about it, there is a nexus of new threats—terrorists, rogue states, international criminals, drug traffickers. They too menace our security, and they will do more of it in the new century. They will be all the more lethal if they gain access to weapons of mass destruction, whether nuclear, chemical or biological.

Because of our size, our strength, our prosperity and the power of our example, Australia and the United States have a special responsibility not only to seize the opportunities but to move against the new threats of the 21st century. Together we can reduce even more the danger of weapons of mass destruction. We can take the fight to the terrorists and the drug traffickers; we can extend the reach of free and fair trade; we can advance democracy around the world; and, yes, we can prove that free societies can embrace the economic and social changes and the ethnic, racial and religious diversity this new era brings and come out stronger and freer than ever.

The threat of nuclear weapons born a half century ago finally is diminishing as a new century begins. The United States and Russia are reducing our arsenals, pointing our weapons away from one another and working to

safeguard nuclear materials and facilities. Every single Australian should be very proud of the role your country has played in guiding the world toward a more secure future. You helped lead the fight to extend the non-proliferation treaty. Your determined diplomacy brought the comprehensive test ban treaty to reality and the world to the verge of banning all nuclear testing for all time. Every nation is in your debt for that achievement. On behalf again of the people of the United States, I say thank you.

Now we must pursue together our remaining arms control agenda for the reductions in Russia's and America's arsenals, once Russia ratifies START II: a chemical weapons convention, so that our troops never face poison gas on the battlefield and our people never fall victim to it in a terrorist attack; a stronger biological weapons convention, so that disease is never used as a weapon of war; and a worldwide ban on landmines, so that all our children can walk with confidence on the earth beneath them.

As we deal with these challenges to our security, we must recognise the new ones which are emerging and the new approaches they require. Terrorism, international crime and drug trafficking are forces of destruction that have no tolerance for national borders. Together we must show zero tolerance for them. That means putting pressure on rogue states, not doing business with them. It is very difficult to do business by day with people who kill innocent civilians by night.

It means giving no aid and quarter to terrorists who slaughter the innocent and drug traffickers who poison our children. It means, in short, pursuing a concerted strategy—intelligence and police cooperation worldwide, coordinated legal action in every country to stop money laundering, shutting down grey markets for guns and false documents, and increasing extraditions. It means security coordination in our airports and airplanes, and giving, each in our own nations, our law enforcement officials the tools they need to cooperate and to succeed.

The measure of our people's security includes not only their physical safety, how-

ever, but, as we all know, their economic well-being. Our two countries have led in opening markets around the world and we can be pleased with our progress. Through GATT, the WTO, APEC and literally hundreds of smaller accords, we are moving to extend the reach of free and fair trade. But we can do more, issue by issue, agreement by agreement.

I am determined to work with Congress in my second term to move ahead boldly on market opening initiatives around the world. Decades from now I want people to say that our generation rose to the challenge of creating a new open trading system for the 21st century. If we do, more people will have good jobs and better lives as they share in humanity's genius for progress.

Over the long term we can best advance the security and prosperity we seek by expanding and strengthening not only trade but the community of free nations. The tide of democracy is now running strong and deep. Consider this: in just the past few weeks, the people of Lithuania, Bulgaria, Romania, Moldova, Nicaragua and Thailand have freely elected their leaders—a prospect literally unimaginable not very long ago. In my own hemisphere every nation but one has raised freedom's flag. In central Europe and in Russia, Ukraine and the other new independent states, the forces of reform have earned our respect and deserve our continued support. For the first time since the rise of nation states on the continent of Europe it is literally conceivable that we have an opportunity—a real and tangible opportunity—to build a continent that is democratic, undivided and at peace. It has never been possible before, and together we can achieve it now.

I know that some people on both sides of the Pacific are concerned that America's continuing involvement with Europe and our intense renewed involvement with our neighbours in Latin America will lead to disengagement from the Asia-Pacific region. They are wrong. Mr Prime Minister, if I could borrow your eloquent phrase—at least I am giving you credit, which we politicians do not often do—the United States does not need to choose between our history and our geography. We need not choose between Europe and

Asia. In a global economy with global security challenges, America must look to the east no less than to the west. Our security demands it. After all, we fought three wars here in living memory. The Cold War's last frontier lies now on the Korean peninsula. The region as a whole is in the midst of profound change—so our security demands it; our prosperity requires it.

One-third of our exports and more than two million American jobs depend upon our trade with Asia. Over the next decade, Asia's remarkable growth will mean ever expanding markets for those who can compete in them. Our future cannot be secure if Asia's future is in doubt. As we enter the 21st century, therefore I say to you that not only has America been but she is and will remain a Pacific power. We want America's involvement and influence to provide the stability among nations which is necessary for the people of the Asia-Pacific region to make the routines of normal life a reality and to spur the economic progress that will benefit all of us.

To meet those challenges of stability we are now pursuing three objectives: stronger alliances, deeper engagement with China and a larger community of democracies. First, we share the view of almost every nation in Asia that a strong American security presence remains the bedrock for regional stability. We will maintain about 100,000 troops across the Pacific, just as we maintain about 100,000 troops in Europe. We will keep them well trained, well equipped and well prepared. We will continue to revitalise our core alliances, both bilaterally and regionally.

These efforts, let me say clearly, are not directed against any nation. They are intended to advance security and stability for everyone so that we can grow together and work together, all of us, in the new century. Our alliance with the democratic, prosperous Japan has been one of the great achievements of the postwar period. Last spring, after more than a year's hard study and work, Prime Minister Hashimoto and I signed a new security charter. Japan's continued support for our military presence and even closer links between our armed forces will enable us to deepen our

cooperation on behalf of peace and stability in this region and beyond.

With our close ally in South Korea we are working to reduce tensions on the Korean peninsula that threaten all of North-East Asia. We must give new momentum now to the four-party peace talks President Kim and I proposed last spring, and we must continue our work to dismantle North Korea's frozen nuclear program. We are reinforcing our security ties with the Philippines and Thailand while multiplying the power of our troops through greater access to regional military facilities.

Finally, and simply put, the defence links between the United States and Australia have never been stronger in peacetime. Mr Prime Minister and members of parliament, the agreements our foreign and defence ministers signed this summer in Sydney authorised the largest exercises involving our troops since World War II. American marines will soon begin training in northern Australia, and we are deepening our already strong security cooperation. Today I say again with utter confidence: our alliance is not just for this time; it is for all time.

As we work nation to nation let us continue to build a new architecture for regional security as well—an architecture through ASEAN that will strengthen our ability to confront common challenges. Already this effort is helping to defuse tensions in the South China Sea and to dispel distrust across the region. We must pursue it to its full potential.

Our second stabilising objective is deeper engagement with China. The direction China takes in years to come, the way it defines its greatness in the future, will help to decide whether the next century is one of conflict or cooperation. The emergence of a stable, open and prosperous China, a strong China confident of its place in the world and willing to assume its responsibilities as a great nation, is in our deepest interest.

True cooperation is both possible and plainly productive. We worked closely with China to extend the nuclear non-proliferation treaty and to secure the passage of the com-

prehensive test ban treaty. We joined to shore up peace in Cambodia and increase stability on the Korean peninsula. We are making progress together on some tough issues, from nuclear technology to intellectual property rights.

The United States and China will continue to have important differences, especially in the area of human rights, and we will continue to discuss them candidly. But, by working together where possible and dealing with our differences openly and respectfully where necessary, we can deepen our dialogue and add to Asia's stability. I look forward to doing just that when I meet for the fourth time with President Jung in the Philippines next week.

The third part of our work for stability is support for the advance of democracy. Our two nations know that democracy comes in many forms. Neither of us seeks to impose our own vision on others, but we also share the conviction that some basic rights are universal and we have to decide whether we believe that. I believe that everywhere people aspire to be treated with dignity, to give voice to their opinions, to choose their own leaders. We have seen these dreams realised in the democratic odyssey of the Asia-Pacific, from Japan to South Korea, to Thailand and Mongolia.

In this century we have sacrificed many of our sons and daughters, your nation and ours, for the cause of freedom, and so we must continue to speak for the cause of freedom in this new age of commerce and trade and technology. We must push repressive regimes in places like Burma to pursue reconciliation in genuine political dialogue. We must assist new democracies like Cambodia by encouraging the development of political parties and institutions. We know that the freer and better educated people are, the more creative they become, the better able they are to compete, the more able they are to satisfy each other's deepest wants and needs. We can look at the economic vitality of the Philippines, Thailand, Taiwan and South Korea to see the proof of this assertion.

As stability extends its reach and strengthens its grip, the Pacific may finally be able to live up to its name. In Cambodia farmers once again till the land that had become horrific killing fields. In Vietnam school children can worry more about their exams than about the war. From Bangkok to Manila, power is no longer used against the people; it is in the hands of the people.

A generation ago it was hard to imagine how rapidly freedom could come to these nations, how rapidly their economies could grow. But freed from the threat of war, unleashed by their new-found freedoms, the people of this region have built among the greatest success stories the world has ever seen. They have transformed economic wastelands into powerful engines for growth; enriched the lives of millions by harnessing the technology of change. Today the economies of the Asia-Pacific are clearly the most dynamic on earth.

More than seven million Americans trace their roots to Asia. Five of our states touch the Pacific. We are inexorably linked to the promise of the Asia-Pacific region. That is why in the first year of my term I sought to elevate the APEC forum that began right here in Canberra into the first ever meeting of Asia and Pacific leaders. At our inaugural summit in Seattle, working closely with your former Prime Minister Paul Keating, we agreed to give this extraordinarily diverse region a common goal: to work as a community of nations committed to economic integration. A year later in Jakarta we made a historic commitment: free trade and investment in the region by 2020. Some said that was an illusory vision, but already that vision is becoming a blueprint—a blueprint taking shape as concrete commitments.

At next week's leaders meeting, Prime Minister Howard and I hope and expect that APEC will give a boost to specific market opening initiatives. For me, I hope that means unshackling trade in computers, semiconductors and telecommunications—the high-tech sectors of the future. We have an opportunity to set an example for the rest of the world, and we ought to seize it. If we do, the nations

of the region will benefit—those who provide the services and those who receive them.

Progress, after all, is not yet everyone's partner, and we have a responsibility to open the doors of opportunity to those who remain outside the global economy. For example, some two-thirds of the people on our planet have no access to a telephone. I found that hard to believe when I saw so many of your fellow citizens with their cellphones in their hands as I drove up and down your streets.

More than half the people of the world are two days walk from a telephone. They are totally disconnected from the communications and information revolution that is the present vehicle for human progress and possibility. If we add their creative energies to the mix which now exists, of course they will gain skills and jobs and greater wealth, but we also will benefit from the higher growth rates, from the expanded markets and from the increasing likelihood that those people will find peaceful rather than war-like ways to release their energies. We can do this if we have the courage not to retreat but instead to compete.

At this year's meeting at APEC, and everywhere I go, I will also deliver again a simple, loud and clear message: the United States is more determined than ever to create an Asian Pacific community of shared efforts, shared benefits and shared destiny. The interests that compel our engagement have grown, not shrunk, and so has our commitment to a Pacific future. We know from our past that we can succeed, that we are equal to the difficulties ahead.

I began the day by quoting Prime Minister Menzies, so let me conclude by returning to his words. He said:

The world needs every scrap of democratic strength that can be found in it because nobody, however optimistic, need underestimate the measure or the character of danger that always confronts us. It is not merely our privilege to be strong, it is our duty to be strong.

The world needs Australia. The world needs the United States. It needs us together as partners and friends and allies. We have stood together in the hard times as partners and friends. Let us stand together and work

together now for a new future of peace and possibility that extends to our children and our grandchildren and to all the children of the world.

May God bless Australia, the United States and the great friendship between our nations. Thank you very much.

Whereupon honourable members and honourable senators rose in their places and applauded.

*The Honourable William Jefferson Clinton
having left the chamber—*

ADJOURNMENT

Mr SPEAKER—I thank members and senators for their attendance. The House stands adjourned until tomorrow at 9.30 a.m. I hereby declare this meeting of the House of Representatives and the Senate concluded.

House adjourned at 4.46 p.m.