

NOTE: The President's 131st news conference began at 12:45 p.m. at Parliament House. In his remarks, he referred to Australian Minister for Trade Timothy Fischer; Prime Minister Jean Chretien of Canada; President Soeharto of Indonesia; and Richard Jewell, former suspect in the

July bombing at Olympic Centennial Park. The President also referred to the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Export Enhancement Program (EEP) and Dairy Export Incentive Program (DEIP).

Remarks at a Luncheon at Parliament House in Canberra November 20, 1996

Thank you very much. Prime Minister and Mrs. Howard, Mr. Speaker and Mrs. Halverson, Madam President, Mr. Reid, Mr. Beazley, Ms. Annus, Ambassador McCarthy: Let me say that Hillary and I and all of us in our delegation have very much looked forward to coming here. So far, our experiences have even exceeded our hopes. We have loved every minute of it. I loved the crowds welcoming us in last night. I think I like Mr. Beazley reminding me that I'm the first Southern Democrat since Appomattox to be elected twice. But I'll have to wait until I get home to see how that plays at home. *[Laughter]*

We're grateful to be here in Canberra, where there is clearly a touch of America in the planning of Walter Burley Griffin, who came from Hillary's home State of Illinois. We feel very much that we are at home and among friends.

This morning I had a good meeting with the Prime Minister. I was honored to meet your Cabinet. I was honored to reaffirm our remarkable security relationship, to review our common efforts to reduce the danger of weapons of mass destruction, an effort in which Australian leadership has been so vital.

We're working to provide peace and stability in the Asia-Pacific region together. And together we're going to make a big difference in building the prosperity of tomorrow, increasing the ties of trade and investment not only between our two nations but throughout the area.

The scope and depth of our cooperation for a long time now is truly extraordinary but not surprising. It is the hallmark of a relationship between two democracies that has grown through struggles of five wars and a whole century's hard labors of peace. Half a world of oceans separates us, but the currents of friendship and commerce and culture flow constantly

between our shores, and they are more binding than the land bridges that connected the continents eons ago.

We have always looked to Australia with great hope, with great trust, with great admiration. We see those expectations from what may be the very first official United States act dealing with Australia. In 1779, Benjamin Franklin issued an unusual passport for Captain Cook who was then returning from one of his explorations here in the South Pacific. That was, of course, during our War of Independence. And Franklin sent special orders to the commanders of all American ships not to attack the ships of the British captain but to treat him and his crew with all civility and kindness. He wrote that Cook's explorations would facilitate communication between distant nations to the benefit of mankind in general.

Franklin was a prophet. From our common struggle in five wars to the trade we have created, to our shared efforts to reduce the nuclear threat, the bonds between our distant nations have indeed been an immense benefit not only to ourselves but to mankind in general. The United States is profoundly grateful for this relationship, for the affection and the warmth that has grown between our citizens.

For many reasons our ties have grown. One of the most important is that we see in each other qualities that we prize and hope for in ourselves. We admire in each other the pioneering spirit that our forebears brought to the tasks of pushing back the frontiers and building nations.

As we move into a new century, we face new and very different frontiers. We are called upon not to homestead in the wilderness but to build for the security and the prosperity of a new era, to deal with the challenges of this

new explosion in the global economy and information technology and the diversity within all of our own societies. But we still need that frontier spirit. We still need to believe that with courage and vision and daring and a firm adherence to our shared and unshakable values, we can make the future better than the present and leave a world worthy of our children and our heritage.

I want all of you to know how very much we Americans like and admire and value Australia and her people. We want the 21st century to be a large partnership between ourselves for the betterment of all of humankind. I believe that we are entering the era of greatest possibility in human history. I believe there will be more people able to live out their dreams than

any time in all of human existence if the values, the record, the partnership we have established can chart the way to the future we long to build. And I promise you that we in the United States will do our best to be worthy of our friendship and that kind of future.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:25 p.m. in the Great Hall. In his remarks, he referred to Prime Minister Howard's wife, Janette; Speaker of the House Bob Halverson and his wife, Maggie; President of the Senate Margaret Reid and her husband, Thomas; Opposition Leader Kim Beazley and his wife, Suzie Annus; and Australian Ambassador to the United States John McCarthy.

Remarks to the Australian Parliament in Canberra

November 20, 1996

Mr. Prime Minister, Mr. Speaker, Madam President of the Senate, to the leader of the opposition and all the Members of the Senate and House and ladies and gentlemen here assembled. Let me begin, Prime Minister, by thanking you, the people of Canberra, and all of Australia for the absolutely tremendous welcome that Hillary and 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're on top of the world, and I thank you for that. [Laughter]

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. Now, I give you that fact as a point of interest, not a pitch for a return engagement here. [Laughter] Forty-one years ago today—not today, 41 years ago this year—here is what 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 9 months; “well-cured,” he called it. [Laughter]

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.