

FOR PRESSMARCH 26, 1976TEXT OF THE PRIME MINISTER'S ADDRESS AT THE OPENING OF THE  
AUSTRALIAN-AMERICAN ASSOCIATION FESTIVAL

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The American revolution 200 years ago marked a tremendous victory for men and women who wanted to be free - free to control the affairs of their own country and their own lives.

Men and women around the world fighting for freedom still look to the United States - because of that revolution - as an inspiration.

Men such as Alexander Solzenitsyn remind us that freedom is still an idea with the power to inspire men to greatness, still a potent idea for change on behalf of human dignity.

In the two hundred years since the American revolution Americans have used their freedom to build through generations of pioneering work and effort - the most prosperous country in the world.

America has used her prosperity to undertake the most generous programmes of aid in the history of the world from the great aid programmes to the Soviet Union after the First World War, through Marshall Aid to its present programmes, the United States has been a force for decency and humanity in the world.

America's freedom has not come cheaply. It has been defended many times in war. It has been tested many times at home. Few nations have been so open to scrutiny, so self-critical, as the United States. Abuses which in other less open societies would remain hidden from the world have been ferreted out and held up to exposure by citizens relentless in their pursuit of human dignity, and by a free press with a great tradition of journalism. Time and again Americans have been shocked - it seems - by what they have learned about themselves - facts they could only have learned because they are free. Invariably, it seems Americans have moved swiftly to right the wrongs and eradicate abuses.

Dictatorships and police states have, of course, used the information revealed by a free press as weapons to attack and discredit the United States. It is as well to remind ourselves that the free society of the United States existed long before those Governments came into being. It will long survive them.

Australia shares - and is proud to share - close bonds of friendship with the United States.

Australia's development as a nation is part of the same great movement of people from Europe that gave birth to the United States. Inevitably, we have shared many experiences during that history in peace as well as in war, since that day in 1792 when the first American ship to visit Australia - "The Philadelphia" - sailed into Port Jackson.

In those days American traders apparently made a good living by selling spirits to the Australian colonists. As a revolutionary country they appear to have exported a revolutionary spirit. Their own revolution, as I recall, was fought on tea. Our first rebellion was fought on rum.

During the nineteenth century Australians and Americans showed a striking willingness to help each other in the search for gold. In 1849-50 many thousands left Sydney for California in the search for gold. The Australians efforts were not entirely appreciated and the rapid emigration from Australia was halted by a vigorous "Sydney Coves Go Home" movement and by the discovery of gold in Australia. Between 1851-56 10,000 people came to Australia from the United States, thus repaying us in full measure for our interest in American gold.

Many famous names in Australian history came from or via the United States:

George Chaffey -	the pioneer of irrigation in Australia;
J.C. Williamson -	who became in his day perhaps the leading theatrical entrepreneur of the British Empire;
King O'Malley -	one of our most colorful politicians;
Walter Burley Griffin-	the designer of our National Capital

The Founding Fathers of the Australian Federation of course, looked to the United States for help in drawing up the Australian Constitution. From the United States, we borrowed the idea of Federalism itself, and the concepts of a Senate and a High Court to interpret the Constitution. The American Senate is, of course, more powerful than ours - though the Australian Senate is not without some useful powers.

It must be understood that between countries which have such beliefs in common there will inevitably grow up links that are different - that are deeper and more enduring - than would develop between nations of quite disparate traditions.

Defence links we have with the United States are based on our own independent assessment that we have interests in common with the United States that we can advance by joining closely together. There may have been some doubts in recent times whether Australia had departed from her state as an aligned nation. Let me state unequivocally, that Australia is an aligned nation - we are an ally of the United States and will remain so.

Because we are an ally of the United States, that does not mean that we support every American action in the world.

But being an ally does imply that the major objectives of both countries are similar - the defence of free societies where men and women can choose their own destinies.

An important part of our role as an ally is that we should form our own independent judgements and speak frankly to the United States about our concerns where they exist. But when we do disagree, our views will be expressed in proper terms, and in the proper way, and not shouted across the seas.

Being an ally does not mean that we cannot form very close relations with other countries. We will speak with all countries, seek cooperative relations with all countries, regardless of ideology. We have close and friendly relations with Indonesia and other countries in south East Asia. Our decisions affect their future and their decisions, our future. Great power politics affect us both. We will seek to strengthen and build on these relationships.

Being an ally means that Australia has an important role to play as an independent and responsible voice in international affairs. Irrational and unreasoned criticism does nothing to help the United States in performing its critically important role in securing world peace. I fear that it has sometimes deterred the United States from doing what needs to be done.

As the world's greatest free power an immense responsibility falls on the United States, a responsibility not just to provide an effective counter in the balance of world power, but a responsibility to provide a lead to the democratic peoples of the world.

A great power like the United States cannot expect to be loved and won't be loved. What any great power should look for is to be respected. The vital thing is that the United States should do those things which only the world's greatest free country can do. If it fails to do this, not only American security but the security of all of us will be at risk.

The important thing is not what people in other countries say, but whether the United States is prepared to do those things which are necessary for the stability and security of the world.

As a democracy, as a free country, our alliance with the United States is accompanied by a warm friendship.

It gives me very great pleasure to ask you - ladies and gentlemen - to rise and drink with me the toast: "To continuing friendship between the two nations".

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