



COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

PROOF

Federation Chamber

CONSTITUENCY STATEMENTS

United States Presidential Election

SPEECH

Thursday, 9 February 2017

BY AUTHORITY OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

SPEECH

Date Thursday, 9 February 2017	Source House
Page 83	Proof Yes
Questioner	Responder
Speaker O'Brien, Ted, MP	Question No.

Mr TED O'BRIEN (Fairfax) (10:11): No American presidential election has ever attracted the attention of Australians like that of Donald Trump. None have come even close—not the election of JFK or Jimmy Carter, of Ronald Reagan or the Bushes, Bill Clinton or even that of Barack Obama—as historic an election as that was. None of them captured the attention of the Australian people like Donald John Trump and his campaign to 'Make America Great Again'. As a medium-sized, free-market liberal democracy, operating in an increasingly integrated and highly volatile global political economy, it matters to Australia who runs the United States of America—especially since the United States has been our most important ally since World War II, the country with which we have our most important symbiotic international relationship, a crucial trading partner, and by far our biggest source of foreign funds and investment. Culturally, we are deeply and intrinsically linked countries, and these connections—their depths and breadths—have made Australians keen observers of the election of President Trump. I have never seen everyday Australians as engaged in international affairs as they are today, and it is all about Donald Trump. And everyone has an opinion—some love him, some do not; some see his victory as a symbol of a new political paradigm, smashing the status quo and turning longstanding assumptions about the world order upside down, while others think everyone should just take a cold shower, relax, and have a cup of tea. Opinions may differ, but most people are asking the same question—that is, what happens from here?

It is for that reason that I extended an invitation to Mr James Carouso, the charge d'affaires of the United States Embassy—the acting ambassador, if you like—to visit my electorate of Fairfax on the Sunshine Coast to have an open discussion on the topic: 'Trump: where to from here?' The charge d'affaires kindly accepted the invitation and so, on the morning of Saturday, 18 February, at the Novotel Twin Waters Resort, the Sunshine Coast will host the No. 1 diplomat from the United States to discuss that question: 'Trump: where to from here?'

I am delighted that my electorate will hear from the charge d'affaires in person and, on their behalf, to Mr Carouso and to the United States Embassy—and to all of our friends in the United States on behalf of the Sunshine Coast—may I say in advance: thank you.