

Andrew N. Liveris, CEO, The Dow Chemical Company  
Dinner Address  
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Thank you, Rupert (Mudoch) ... Malcolm (Binks) ... Larry Kudlow) ... and everyone for honoring me tonight. It is indeed very gratifying when an honor such as this comes from the people of your home country ... and from the people who are your country's best friends ... both personally and collectively.

And I know all of us are grateful for your integral role in this organization, the tireless efforts that you have made, as well as your father before you, in fostering strong ties between the Australia and the United States.

And by the way, thank you for mentioning my grandfather, who stepped off that boat in Darwin and landed, fortunately, on friendly ground.

I often think of him and my grandmother for many reasons ... not least because they must have been very visionary people ... to have foreseen a bright future for Darwin, which at the time had 300 people, no electricity or running water, and about 300,000 crocodiles and countless variations of tropical diseases. Since then, we've added electricity, running water and medicines, but the crocs are still there.

Despite all the hardship, my grandparents, followed by my own father and mother, built a life for themselves in this distant but friendly town. I wish they could all be here tonight; they'd enjoy the friends and camaraderie. I have a feeling that in spirit, they may well be here ... in fact, I heard the chandeliers suspiciously rattling a bit earlier.

One thing we know from gatherings like this one is that Americans and Australians get on well with one another.

Part of it, of course, is our common Anglo heritage ... we are both born of what David Hackett Fischer calls *Albion's Seed*, which, along with his other work, traces the very strong influence of England to the various countries and regions of the world.

And we are, of course, to paraphrase Churchill, both separated from the British – and from one another – by a common language. Our heritage, however, does not mean we are exactly alike. Quite the contrary, in fact.

Climate for example. Australia's climate is not known for its friendliness. It is the driest inhabited continent, the flattest, and has the oldest and least fertile soil. Thank goodness for Antarctica or we'd be at the bottom of the list.

Only the south-east and south-west corners are temperate, and the north, where I come from, has a little bit of everything ... rainforest, woodland, grassland and desert.

And although we are a country and a continent, there aren't many of us. Unless you're on one of the coasts, it's hard to find your neighbor.

Americans, on the other hand, grew up in a country that is rich in just about everything, particularly agriculture, which enabled the country to support the huge number of immigrants who came to these shores ... in the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, and by the way, still now in the 21<sup>st</sup>.

Today, as a result, America is a land of 300 million people and counting. Australia – about the same size geographically – has 20 million.

Our political histories are also different. Australia was, as we all know, originally a penal colony, where men – and it was mostly men – made the long trip from England in order to be put in jail ... whereas men and women came to America to be free, in particular to practice religious freedom.

America became an independent country in 1776 ... Australia, in 1901, at around the time the 26<sup>th</sup> President of the United States was taking office, and undertaking the construction of a blue water navy that would one day come to our rescue.

It wasn't until 1986 that Australians severed all remaining constitutional ties with Britain, but not all ties. Today we still have a queen named Elizabeth the Second who resides in Buckingham Palace, and we considered becoming a republic, but didn't go through with it.

So how is it, given our contrasting histories, that Americans and Australians have such a close relationship?

I know there is a school of thought that relationships between nations are the product of rational – sometimes cynical – calculations of national interest. I disagree with that.

I think that relationships – between nations as between people – are built on much more ... on shared values and beliefs ... and the experience of working in common cause for those values.

Those values, at their core, amount to two things really: freedom, and the pursuit of happiness.

For these two values, Americans and Australians have put their sons and daughters in harm's way many times. In the 20<sup>th</sup> century, we fought alongside one another in two world wars. We did the same in Korea and Vietnam and the first Gulf War. We stood in solidarity during the Cold War. And now we fight side-by-side again in Afghanistan and Iraq.

And I think we Australians all take great pride in the courage of Prime Minister John Howard, in being unflinching in his support for the cause of freedom and in standing up to tyranny in all of its forms. History shows us time and again that that is the stuff of great leaders.

Perhaps because our countries are continental, we tend to see the large issues and do not let trivialities divide us. When horrific acts occur – whether on the Island of Bali or the Island of Manhattan, we understand that moral relativism has no place when innocent people are being murdered.

We also know that winning the war against totalitarians – whose unmistakable weapons have always been terrorism and intimidation – does not come easy. In fact, victory most often follows defeat, sometimes many defeats. Before there could be a Battle of Yorktown or the Kokoda Track (Trail) or Normandy or the Coral Sea, there were many Germantowns and Gallipolis.

Australians and Americans also share an abiding belief in other people ... which is why we are both nations of immigrants, and why our former enemies are now among our most prosperous and valued friends ... even when we have disagreements with them.

And we share a sense of fair play, which means that everyone gets a chance to succeed and that hard work and talent matter most, whether it is in the board room, on the rugby field, or the American football field.

We do not think we have a corner on the best products, the best ideas or the best minds ... which is why we invite trade to our shores and students and faculty to our universities.

And that brings me to why we are here tonight and why I am honored to be your guest.

You may have noticed that your dinner has cost a bit more than usual tonight ... even by New York standards.

The "surcharge" was worth paying because it is going to people who have talent and who work hard ... those who earn the fellowships that this wonderful organization provides.

So many of us here tonight have looked across the Pacific Ocean ... from both sides ... and have been greeted with generosity, friendship and opportunity.

It is a very large ocean, but a very short and worthwhile journey, and I am pleased tonight to be helping others make that journey.

As always, the rewards will be great on both sides.

Finally, a word of thanks to those who most closely shared my incredible journey from the Aussie North to New York ... and many places in between ... my friends of course from all over the world ... my Dow Chemical colleagues (here tonight) including Ted Doan ... Zoltan Merszei ... Paul Oreffice ... and Bill Stavropoulos; and especially my sister, Maria Bellas and niece, Lia.

Also I could not have done any of this without the love and support of my wife, Paula, who has always been there for me through thick and thin ... and who raised our three beautiful and caring children, Nicholas, Alexandra, and Anthony.

Lastly, thanks to the American-Australian Association and my dinner hosts.

You guys deserve an Aussie cheer ... Aussie, Aussie, Aussie ... Oy, Oy, Oy.

Thank you very much.

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