

Exchange With Reporters in Sydney, Australia

January 1, 1992

The President. I wish all the people of Australia, too, a very happy New Year.

Australia-U.S. Relations

Q. Mr. President, do you think you will be able to get some kind of concession on wheat? The Australians are upset about that.

The President. I don't think it's a question of concession. What we do is tell them our problems, and they are very frank with us. That's how you can tell a good friend; that's how you can tell an ally, when they lay it right out on the table. They have some difficulties with what we call the EEP. I understand those. I hope they understand that legislation was not aimed at Australia. But if they don't, they will by the time I get through.

Q. No change, then?

The President. So what we're going to do is talk to them openly, as friends do with each other, and move this relationship forward, although it's pretty far forward now. It's strong.

You all are too young, except for one or two gray heads around here, but I remember the Battle of the Coral Sea. I wasn't quite in it. I was almost 18; I think the following month I went into the service. But the emotion that Americans with the memory have is the same as Australians with the memory have.

There's a guy had an American flag up, out on the point, and there was a neat story about him in today's paper. So I called him up this morning. I did not detect any hang-over from New Year's Eve—[laughter]—being a doctor, he is. And I asked him to come over to the hotel, which he'll do, Dr. Marsden. I don't know the man. But I can tell you, I think I speak for all Americans when I say how wonderful it was to see the Stars and Stripes flying along the shore as we were here to celebrate New Year's.

And I say that, I cite it only as one manifestation of a friendship that I know exists. You drive along the street and see these guys tearing out of the pubs, offering up a Foster's, and wishing you well—you know it's real. So, that's what I'm going to concentrate on today.

Trade Issues

Q. Mr. President, will there be no concessions then, sir, on foreign subsidies?

The President. We're not talking concessions; we're talking about eliminating differences where possible.

Q. Can't the Japanese tell you the same things then, if you tell the Australians, though, it's not possible?

The President. We're in—wait until we get to Japan, and we'll talk about that.

Q. Isn't there a little irony in that, sir?

New Year's Resolutions

Q. Did you make any New Year's resolutions?

The President. New Year's resolution? Always for peace; certainly this year, with Americans hurting, our economy sluggish, for prosperity at home. I think of the people that don't have it so good back there. But I also am confident that they will. I believe that with what we're going to be proposing, plus what this economy will do anyway, it's going to be all right. But while people are hurting like that, I mean, my first resolution has to be for the well-being of the American people.

Q. Any personal New Year's resolutions?

The President. Oh, yes.

Q. More jogging, more—

The President. Well, a little speedier. I'm not going to increase it. Two miles; I want to do it a little faster so the secret branch, the Secret Service here in Australia, will report into their bosses a little more proficiency. I'd like to catch a few more fish,