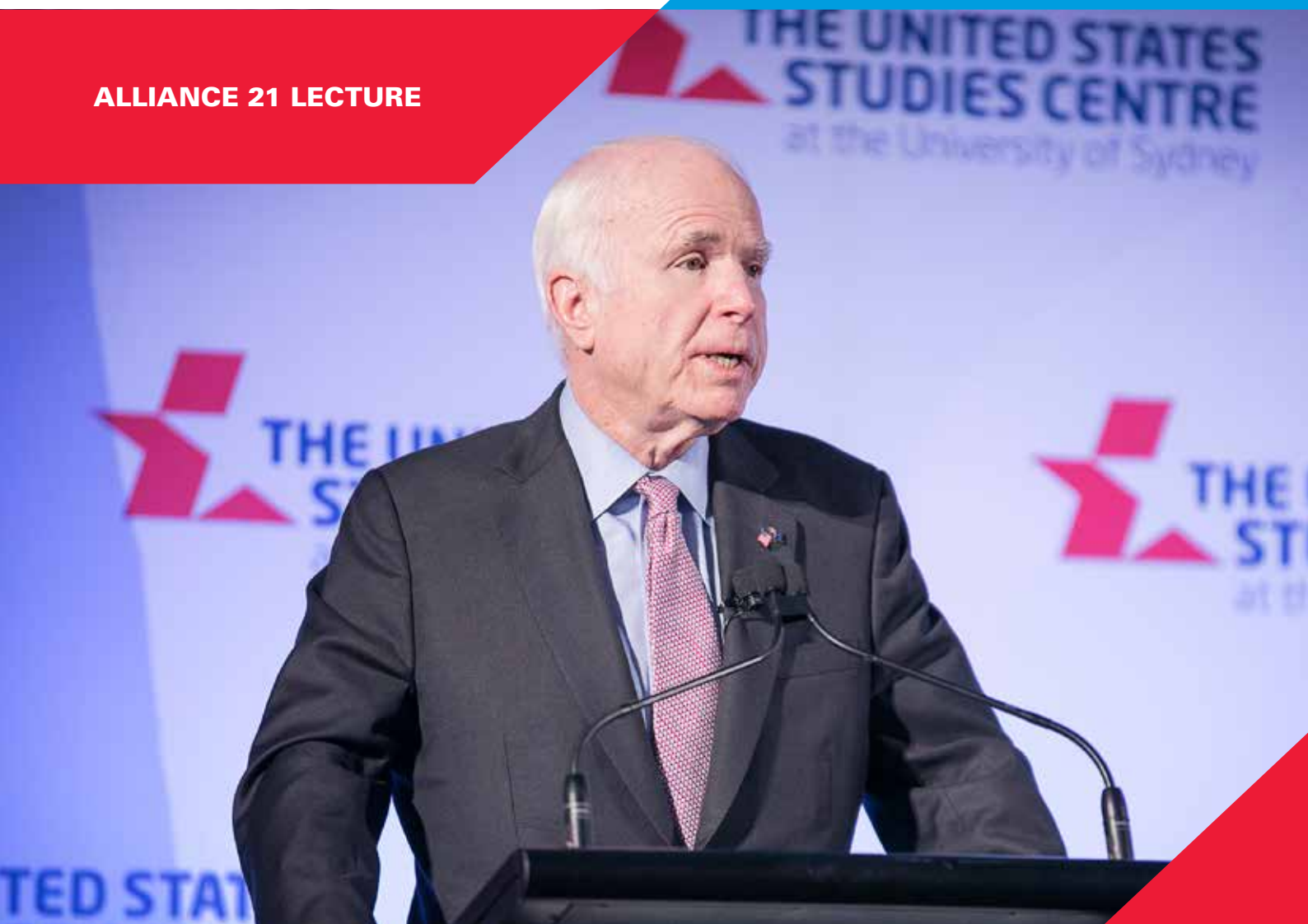


ALLIANCE 21 LECTURE



AN ADDRESS BY
SENATOR
JOHN McCAIN

State Library of New South Wales
30 May 2017

The United States Studies Centre

Founded in 2006, the United States Studies Centre at the University of Sydney deepens Australia's understanding of the United States through research, teaching and public engagement. Through rigorous analysis of American foreign policy, economics, politics and culture, the Centre has become a national resource, building Australia's awareness of the dynamics shaping America — and critically — their implications for Australia.

Alliance 21 Program

The Alliance 21 Program is a multi-year research initiative that examines the historically strong Australia-United States relationship and works to address the challenges and opportunities ahead as the alliance evolves in a changing Asia. Based within the United States Studies Centre at the University of Sydney, the Program was launched by the Prime Minister of Australia in 2011 as a public-private partnership to develop new insights and policy ideas.

The Australian Government and corporate partners Boral, Dow, News Corp Australia, and Northrop Grumman Australia support the program's second phase, which commenced in July 2015.

The Alliance 21 Program receives funding support from the following partners.



An address by Senator John McCain



US Senator John McCain delivered the Alliance 21 Lecture in Sydney on 30 May 2017 as a guest of the United States Studies Centre at the University of Sydney.

Senator McCain spoke at the New South Wales State Library and joined the Centre's Director of Research James Brown in conversation, before taking a number of questions from the audience of 500 guests.

John McCain entered the United States Naval Academy in June of 1954 and served in the United States Navy until 1981. He was elected to the US House of Representatives from Arizona in 1982 and elected to the United States Senate in 1986. He was the Republican Party's nominee for president in the 2008 election. He currently serves as Chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee.

Watch Senator McCain's speech at ussc.edu.au/mccain

Speech

Thank you, Premier, for that kind introduction.

I am grateful to James Brown, Simon Jackman and the Board of the US Studies Centre at the University of Sydney for inviting me to speak with you this evening, and for everything they have done to organise this remarkable event.

And may I say in the beginning, I am honoured by the presence of so many old friends, especially Prime Minister Howard and Prime Minister Hawke. Thank you — I am honoured by your presence my friends.

And let me thank you all for being here this evening. I know there are many better things you could be doing. And you will wish you had after the two hour address I have planned on the latest Republican plan to reform healthcare in America.

I regret to say that this marks the end of my visit to Australia. I have had excellent meetings with Prime Minister Turnbull and his team, as well as opposition leaders.

I have also met with Australian diplomats, parliamentarians, military officers, business people and private citizens. This is the true strength of our alliance — the millions of our citizens who work together, serve together, sacrifice together and lift each other up every day. The occupants of The Lodge and the White House

come and go, but these deeper bonds — they are unbreakable, in fact, they are eternal.

This is what brought us together yesterday, at the Australian-American Memorial in Canberra, as we observed Memorial Day, a day when Americans pause to honour all who serve us in battle, and remember our fallen comrades. Memorial Day may be an American occasion, but it is fitting that I could mark it here in Australia, whose sons and daughters have fought with ours ever since the Battle of Hamel.

This audience needs no reminder of our nations' shared history of military service. All I would add is that this history has always been deeply personal for me.

My grandfather first sailed here aboard the Great White Fleet. He later commanded US air forces in the South Pacific during the Second World War, fighting in the defence of Australia, and then he commanded aircraft carriers under Admiral Halsey.

My father captained a submarine that was based out of Perth for much of the Pacific campaign and then commanded all US forces in the Pacific during the Vietnam War.

During my own Navy deployments in Southeast Asia, I spent an evening on R&R here in Sydney, enjoying the many cultural amenities of King's Cross.



Senator McCain in conversation with USSC Director of Research James Brown

Most recently, my sons, Jack and Jimmy, have served alongside your sons and daughters in Iraq, and Afghanistan and here in this region. The McCain family has literally been sailing and flying around Australia and the Pacific for most of the past century — for better or for worse. I grew up on these stories — tales of adventure, and heroism and sacrifice that “hath no greater love.”

Australia has always had a special place in my heart. And on behalf of my entire nation, I want to say something again to my Australian friends that we Americans can never tell you enough: Thank you — from the bottom of my heart, thank you.

I bring up our history not to bask in sentiment, but because it raises an important question — indeed, the most fundamental question of all: Why are we allies? Why have we done all this together? And why should we continue to do so?

The answer transcends narrow materialism. That alone is not why, time and time again, our citizens have left their beloved homelands, and ventured far into the world, and endured the horrors and deprivations of war, sometimes never to return.

No, the animating purpose of our alliance is that we are free societies, founded by immigrants and pioneers, who put our faith in the rule of law, and who believe that our destinies are inseparable from the character of the broader world order.

We believe that when the strong trample the rights and independence of the weak with impunity, then our liberty and our sovereignty are at risk.

We believe that when all peoples cannot sail the seas, and fly the skies and engage in commerce freely, then our prosperity will suffer.

We believe that when the balance of power in the world favours those bent on injustice, and aggression, and conquest, then the peace we cherish will not last.

“I realise that some of President Trump’s actions and statements have unsettled America’s friends. They have unsettled many Americans as well.”

These are values that time does not diminish. These are ideas that truly are worth the fighting for. This is why we are allies — and why we must remain so.

And yet, I realise that I come to Australia at a time when many are questioning whether America is still committed to these values. And you are not alone. Other American allies have similar doubts these days. And this is understandable.

I realise that some of President Trump’s actions and statements have unsettled America’s friends. They

have unsettled many Americans as well. There is real debate underway now in my country about what kind of role America should play in the world. And frankly, I do not know how this debate will play out.

What I do believe, and I don't think I am exaggerating here, is that the future of the world will turn, to a large extent, on how this debate in America is resolved.

That's why I and others are fighting so hard to ensure that America stands by our allies and remains an active, principled leader in the world. And we cannot do it alone. We need your help, my friends. Now more than ever, we Americans are counting on Australia and our allies to stick with us, to encourage us to stay true to who we are at our best, and to remind us always just how much is at stake.

"No one has ever gotten rich betting against America, my friends, and now is not a good time to start."

That's why I have come to Australia, and why I want to speak with you tonight. But I also want you to know this: Just as America is counting on Australia, I believe that Australia, and our allies and partners, can still count on America.

I know there is a belief that Americans have turned isolationist and protectionist. But recent public opinion polls consistently tell the opposite story. Most Americans say they still see globalisation as good for them. Most Americans say they still want to maintain a strong military. Most Americans say they still favour our existing alliances — 89 per cent in one poll just last year. Most Americans even say they want to maintain, or increase, these alliance commitments.

Put simply, my friends: I believe bipartisan majorities of Americans remain pro-alliance, pro-trade, pro-investment, pro-military, pro-globalisation, in favour of an internationalist foreign policy, and supportive of our alliance with Australia.

Ultimately, America's greatest strength comes from the values of our society, values we share with Australia — our commitment to truth over falsehood, fairness over injustice, freedom over oppression, and the immortal spirit of humankind.

These values are enshrined in our institutions. Our foreign friends always tend to focus on the person in the White House. But America is far bigger than that.

America is our courts of justice.

America is our state and local governments.

America is our Congress, which currently has within it as many internationalists, both Republicans and Democrats, as any Congress in which I have served.

America is our free press. I hate it, but it is true, and it is essential.

America is our men and women in uniform — who remain, despite recent budget pressures, the most committed, combat-hardened, formidable force on the planet.

America is the dynamism of our workers and entrepreneurs, our investors and innovators, who continue to hurtle forward, to our alliance's mutual benefit. Trade flows rise and fall, but America remains Australia's largest foreign investor. This is money that comes here, and stays here and is a great force for good here.

I know that the pushing, and shoving, and checking, and balancing of my country's institutions may not be pretty. But this vast, intricate, rambunctious and beautiful system called American democracy is doing exactly what it is supposed to do.

Yes, America has its problems. But even on our worst day, far more people and far more money are trying to get into America than out of it. No one has ever gotten rich betting against America, my friends, and now is not a good time to start.

So what is really in question, then, is America's judgement, our decisions. And I realise there is much to criticise. But Americans can always make better decisions, and I am counting on all of you to help us do so.

I recognise, for example, how damaging America's withdrawal from TPP was. To be sure, America's economic engagement in this region was always bigger than TPP, and that remains true today. But we must always talk straight with each other, my friends. The fact that both American presidential candidates last year opposed TPP, and America's subsequent withdrawal from it, was a major strategic mistake.

I know Australia is now talking with Japan and others about moving forward with TPP despite America's withdrawal. I would strongly encourage that. The case for an open, rules-based, regional economic architecture is just as compelling today as it ever was. So I would urge you to keep at it. And hopefully, someday in the future, under different circumstances, America will decide to join you.

America can also make better decisions on security issues. The president and I may differ at times, but not when it comes to rebuilding America's military.

"The challenge is that as China has grown wealthier and stronger, it seems to be acting more and more like a bully."

The defence legislation that I, as Chairman of the Armed Services Committee, will soon introduce will significantly increase funding for America's military. After years of debilitating cuts to our armed forces, we will begin restoring their readiness, growing their size and modernising their capabilities.

As part of this effort, I have called for an Asia-Pacific Stability Initiative. The goal would be, working in concert with our allies and partners, to deter aggression and maintain a balance of power in this region that safeguards our common interests. We would do this by enhancing the presence, resilience, and credibility of US forces in the Pacific. This is especially necessary now, as North Korea gets closer and closer to developing a nuclear-capable intercontinental ballistic missile.

Talk of regional security inevitably raises the question of China, and I know this question is hotly debated here in Australia. I know there is a real concern about Australia becoming entangled in a strategic competition between America and China. And I know that contributes to a belief among some in this country that your economic relationship with China and your security relationship with America may be irreconcilable, and that you must choose one over the other.

My friends: I would humbly suggest that this is the wrong way to think about it.

To be sure, China has performed an economic miracle — one that not only benefits millions of its own people, but also many Australians and Americans as well. This is why we have promoted China's integration into the



Senator McCain speaks at the State Library of New South Wales in Sydney

global economy. And this work is far from over. Australia and America need to support China's reformers and ensure that all of our peoples can compete on a level economic playing field.

The challenge is that as China has grown wealthier and stronger, it seems to be acting more and more like a bully. It is refusing to open more of its economy so that foreign businesses can compete fairly. It is stealing other peoples' intellectual property. It is asserting vast territorial claims that have no basis in international law. And it is using its trade and investment as tools to coerce its neighbours.

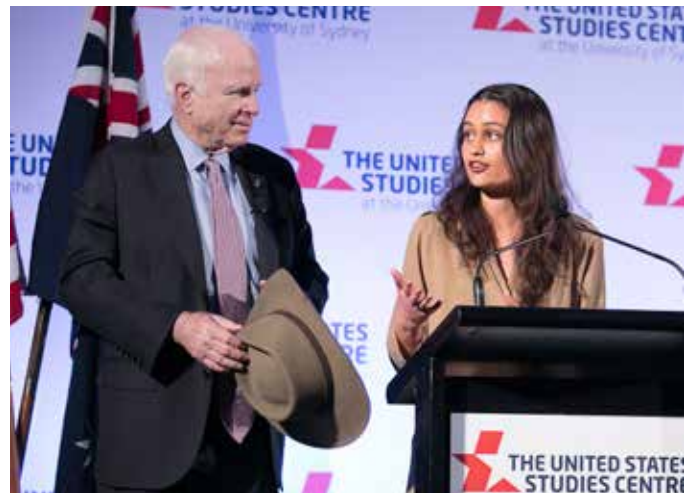
The idea that China is now the steward of our open, rules-based global economic order may sell at Davos. But people in this country and this region know better. This poses an important question, but it is not whether Australia or America must choose China at the expense of one another. For either of us to demand that of the other would be deeply unfair and misguided. That is a false choice.

The real choice, the real question, is whether America and Australia are better off dealing with China's strategic and economic challenges together, or by ourselves.

I believe the answer is clear. And so do growing numbers of nations across the Pacific. In places like Japan and India, Korea and Singapore, Vietnam and Indonesia, people are saying they want to live in a region, and in a world, that has rules — rules that afford all nations the opportunity to grow strong and prosperous. More and more nations in this region want to get closer to Australia and America because we treat them as equals — not as subjects or tributaries, but as friends.

It is certainly true that the return of China will shape the future of Asia, hopefully for the best. But I would submit to you that the rise of Asia — a community of peaceful, prosperous, law-abiding, rights-respecting and increasingly democratic nations — this Asia can and should do just as much, or more, to shape the future of China. We need to stick together, as allies, and seize this tremendous opportunity.

My friends: I know that many of you have a lot of questions about where America is headed under President Trump. Frankly, so do many Americans. What I would say is that the new administration is just



USSC intern Caitlin Gauci thanks Senator McCain

that — new. It is still finding its feet. But it has many decent, capable people — Jim Mattis, H.R. McMaster, John Kelly, Mike Pompeo, Dan Coats, Rex Tillerson — people who deserve your support and, frankly, need it.

You will not agree with all of the president's decisions. Neither will I. But I am fully committed to doing whatever I can to help my country and my president succeed in the world. And I would beseech all of you to join me and help me. The arc of history does not bend inevitably toward justice. As always, that is up to us.

America needs Australia and our other allies now more than ever. We need your strength. We need your steady leadership. We need your wise counsel. We need your patience and your understanding. We need your commitment to our common interests and ideals. We need you to have faith in America and in the enduring value of our alliance.

We need you to be confident that when we have differences, we will resolve them fairly and respectfully, as we always have, and that when we face tough choices, we can lean on and depend on each other, as we always have, and that when all is said and done, we are in it together, for the long haul, as we always have been.

So long as people of courage and goodwill in both of our countries refuse to give up on each other or count each other out, so long as we continue to believe in ourselves and believe in each other, so long as we remain ever mindful that we are always, always better off united, as friends, as brothers and sisters, as allies, then I believe there is hope, and with hope, we can do anything together. ■



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