



Remarks at The Perth Welcoming Dinner

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To our wonderful host, Peter Iancov, who I have begun to know during this visit;

To all of you here tonight in this beautiful Club, of which I have heard so much;

Very many thanks for the warmth of the welcome I have received here in Perth; indeed at every part of Australia I have traveled. And thank you for the wonderful home and opportunity you have given to so many of my countrymen, who find in this land a home and a form of hospitality with which they can so readily identify. What great hospitality I have enjoyed in Perth, and how much I've learned about what makes Western Australians so distinctive as a special breed of Australians. Let me again thank the wonderful Australian and US sponsors of this visit, particularly John Battley of Globetrotter Travel and Penny Inc.; Virgin Australia airline; and the Kefford Corporation, as well as our great host tonight.

I am glad that, as Ethiopians, you are our neighbours across the Indian Ocean.

Today, many of you heard my general remarks about Ethiopian-Australian relations. Now, if I may, I'd just like to alert you to some of my concerns about the Red Sea region, embracing as it does Arabia, the Levant, North Africa, and the Horn of Africa.

There is great instability, of course, in Yemen and Somalia, but we should be aware that this unrest infects, for example, Saudi Arabia, Djibouti, Ethi-

opia, Eritrea, Sudan, and Egypt. In short, it affects the Red Sea-Suez sea lanes and all the states which rely on that strategic waterway, including Israel, Australia, and the Mediterranean trading states.

The region is also vitally affected by the Saudi rivalry with Iran, and with Qatar, and the competition for influence with Turkey. Russia is projecting more into the area, and the US and the People's Republic of China, are working to establish a strategic dominance over the area. There are many factors at play.

We see, in all this, also, concerns in Egypt over the construction of the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam, being built as a hydro-electrical power generator on the Blue Nile near the Sudanese border. The Blue Nile, which is the primary source of water for the river which feeds the lower Nile. It is therefore regarded as the lifeline of Egypt, and Egypt has traditionally felt that no upstream riparian states had the right to interfere with its flow.

Legalities aside – and international water law clearly gives upstream riparian states rights over the flow through their territory – Ethiopia has tried to reassure Egypt that the new dam would not impede the flow of water to the Sudan and Egypt. Yet Egypt remains unconvinced, and has, we know, considered steps to halt the construction of the dam, and has revived its sponsorship of insurgent groups inside Ethiopia.

This is unfortunate, because it is clear that the issue can be resolved amicably, and without interfering with Egypt's lifeline. Careful diplomacy is needed in this regard, because there is an underlying framework of friendship which needs to be reconstructed between Egypt and Ethiopia.

After all, Egypt's Coptic Church in Alexandria has played a role in Ethiopian Christianity for some 1,500 years, and Egypt provided the Abunas – the Patriarchs – for the Ethiopian Orthodox Church until the 1950s. Ethiopian People, too, were overwhelmingly grateful for the military intervention by Egypt last year, to save Ethiopian Christian workers who had been captured by ISIS fighters in Libya.

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It is not for me to suggest policy, but here in this audience I can raise the reality that Australia is a friend of both Ethiopia and Egypt. Australia, too, is vitally concerned about the Red Sea-Suez sea link. Australia is concerned about maintaining access to Africa through the African Union, which is headquartered in Addis Ababa.

So what I am saying is that Australia is not a disinterested party in this region. It is a vitally concerned party, and could well play a role in ensuring that the delicate matters can be calmed to the advantage of all.

Ethiopia itself has many concerns. We see that the interregnum has already lasted 43 years. An entire generation has grown up in which 3,500 years of history have been wiped from the educational syllabus. Effectively, when the communist *Dergue* staged its coup against the Ethiopian People and killed my Grandfather and many of my family, it took away not only the momentum toward democracy and prosperity which the Emperor began; it also took away the identity and unique sense of pride and purpose of the Ethiopian People.

There is now a great curiosity in Ethiopia from the new generations to learn about their history. This is identity politics in the truest sense. But the books have been burned. The People have nowhere to go.

The Ethiopian Crown Council, of which I am President, is the last Imperial body, created by the Constitution, still functioning, and now the Ethiopian Government recognises and respects it. The Council's function, historically, has been to advise regnant Emperors, and, with the passing of an Emperor, to act *as* the Crown until the Council can name a new Emperor from among the Solomonic bloodline.

In recent years, the Crown Council has championed charities in the areas of education and the delivery of purified water. We created the Water Initiative for Africa, which has developed unique technologies for the removal of all biological and viral contaminants from water in remote villages.

But now our urgent task is to rebuild the identity security of Ethiopians. Our history is unique, not just the three millennia of our unbroken

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Solomonic bloodline, which represents the timeline of Judeo-Christian civilisation. The Solomonic line was built upon an earlier Cushitic civilisation, and that was built on the origins of humanity itself, which emerged from the Rift Valley to cross the Red Sea in Eurasia and the world.

Ethiopia's languages are unique, and their written forms – based on Ge'ez – link back to Aramaic. The more you learn about Ethiopian history, the more compellingly significant it becomes. And yet my People were deprived of the knowledge of their ancestors these past 43 years. The Government itself has recognised this and has not only now begun to encourage the celebration of the Victory of Adwa Day each March, to acknowledge the great defeat by Emperor Menelik II of the Italian invading army in 1896, but has also supported the erection of a statue at the African Union of Emperor Haile Selassie I, the true inspiration behind the creation of the original Organisation for African Unity.

Today, we have launched an initiative to create the Haile Selassie I Library and Conference Centre in Addis Ababa. We have reason to believe that the Government of Ethiopia will allocate land to us for this purpose. And this will represent the start, the re-birth, of educating the new generations of Ethiopians in the greatness of their historical contributions.

In this project, our mutual friend here tonight, Gregory Copley, has committed the International Strategic Studies Association, based in Washington, DC, to help achieve this task. The Association has, within it, The Zahedi Centre for the Study of Monarchy, Traditional Governance, and Sovereignty, of which I am a co-Patron. And together we have begun planning this new facility for Addis Ababa.

It will represent the re-birth of the Solomonic history in Ethiopia.

Let me remind you that there have been other interregna in the past in Ethiopia, and the Crown has always returned. It will do so again. And we are fighting to make that happen sooner, rather than later.

We do need help with this project, as with our water initiative. We need to help make up for the 43 years of progress lost to Ethiopia so that it can play

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its rightful part in world and regional affairs. You will find, as the petro-states begin to lose their viability, that the ancient civilisations and cultures will re-emerge, because they have identity and cohesion. Ethiopia, which is critically placed in its geography, will be, within a decade, a key anchor of stability in the north-western Indian Ocean, and a guardian of stability in the Red Sea.

There are so many aspects to all of this that we cannot have time to touch upon tonight, but I hope you will read all you can on Ethiopia and its history. I hope that you will visit our ancient land and experience its unique and beautiful marvels, as well as its warm and intricate hospitality.

Let me conclude by saying that I would love to continue our conversations. I am very happy to have followed the urgings of my Western Australian advisors, Gregory Copley and Andrew Pickford, to come to Australia to commemorate my Grandfather's State Visit. I was a lad when he returned from this visit, glowing with the friendship he had experienced here. I was moved, then, when I was able to lay a wreath at the Australian War Memorial, where he had laid a wreath. And to plant a tree in Melbourne's Royal Botanic Gardens, but a few yards from where he had planted a tree. And that tree flourishes. It carried the heart and sap of Ethiopia for all of the years that Ethiopia has been in agony.

I know that part of me is now Australian. And that part of you, when you reach my sacred homeland, will become Ethiopian, even as you know that the bloodline of Solomon and Sheba carry your history, too: the history of our Judeo-Christian and Abrahamic civilisation. Many Australians have poured their hearts into Ethiopia, and we will never forget that.

God Bless you. Thank you. And God Bless the Queen of Australia and every one of her People in this great land.