



Ambassador Jeffrey L. Bleich – Marine Corp Ball

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**Remarks of Ambassador Bleich  
at the 237<sup>th</sup> Marine Corp Ball, Canberra**

*(As prepared for delivery – November 16, 2012)*

Chief of the Australian Defense Force, General David Hurley and his talented wife, Mrs. Linda Hurley,

General Melvin Spiese, United States Marine Corps and his wife Mrs. Filomena Spiese,  
Service Chiefs,

Cabinet Secretaries,

Distinguished guests,

And all of you, who have served our nations -- whether in uniform or not – but especially tonight, our Marines.

It is a great honor to join with you all tonight to celebrate the 237th Birthday of the United States Marine Corp.

Over the last few years, I've had the privilege to serve with several Marines here at the Embassy and with many Marine Security Guard Detachments around the world: at the White House, in Afghanistan, in the UAE, Japan, the Philippines, and in the past week with our Secretary of Defense and Secretary of State in Perth and in Adelaide. We've drilled for events together. We've gone through inspections together. We've stood together in blistering heat in the Northern Territory as well as in the ice cold rains and wind at Lake Burley Griffin on the anniversary of September 11.

We've also played footy together. Had Happy Hours together. We welcomed Marines to Darwin and observed their exceptional service there. As Gen. Krause will tell you, their service was flawless. As the Marines were preparing to depart, we were asked by the media if there had been any law enforcement issues while the Marines were there. Gen. Krause said he had to acknowledge that there were two speeding tickets issued, and he wanted to thank those marines for adding to the local economy.



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The marines are our family, and tonight, and later this week on Thanksgiving, as family we'll break bread together -- to give thanks for the many opportunities and blessings we share.

I know these young marines, and to a person, there is no group of people with better values, better self-discipline, greater courage, and greater concern for doing the right thing, than the United States Marines.

Now, as I told some of you last year, First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt put this a little differently. She came out here in 1943 and dedicated our Embassy in the depth of WWII. And at that time she said: "The Marines I have seen around the world have the cleanest bodies, the filthiest minds, the highest morale, and the lowest morals of any group of animals I have ever seen. Thank God for the United States Marine Corps!" Thank God for the United States Marine Corps.

No words can truly match your deeds. But one of the defining features of a Marine is that he or she doesn't need praise to know the value of their service. President Reagan said it well. He said: "Some people spend an entire lifetime wondering if they made a difference in the world. The Marines don't have that problem."

A year ago, another President paid tribute to you as well, right here in Canberra. President Obama addressed the full Parliament of Australia, he gave an historic 25-minute address about the future of this region, and our commitment to the region. But when it came to demonstrating that commitment, the President needed only a few words. When it came to assuring Australia and its neighbors that we would be here for humanitarian aid, that we would be here for disaster relief, that we would be here to ensure free navigation and open trade, and that we would be here to ensure peace and stability for all nations, it took only five words: "we're sending you our Marines."

So Happy Birthday to the marines. I salute you each time I enter the Chancery and each night when I leave. And we especially salute you tonight.

Thank God for the U.S. Marines. And may God Bless them. May God Bless Australia. And May God Bless the United States of America.

Semper fi.