

# Building Global Partnerships for Stronger Local Economies

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Presenter, Today Programme, BBC Radio 4

11 February 2015

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### Justin Webb

Thank you, everyone, for coming. A very warm welcome to all of you, and particularly to our guest this evening, Governor Scott Walker. It's wonderful, there are so many senior Republicans coming through London at the moment. Bobby Jindal and Jeb Bush, and who else have we had? Chris Christie. I don't know what it is, why they're all here. The governor does have a proper reason to be here, which I think he's going to talk to us about later on. He's here on official business. I think he might care to say that he's here for reasons that are separate from those reasons that the others were here, but I'm sure he'll be happy when we get to questions – which we certainly will have a reasonable amount of time for – I'm sure he'll be happy to talk about those wider reasons and the things that might have brought the other people here.

The obvious question, I suppose, is: who in their right mind would ever want to be president of the United States of America? There was a great moment when Obama was elected in 2008, when all the American papers – and they can be rather pedantic in their headlines, can't they, in a sort of post-Leveson way: 'Obama Elected President' was the headline in the *New York Times*, and '44th President is Barack Obama' in the *Washington Post*. I thought one newspaper captured the kind of ambivalence of the moment and that was the *Onion*, the satirical paper. Their headline was: 'Black Man Given Nation's Worst Job'. So it may well be that that will be one question for the governor, whether he is or is not in for the nation's worst job – and if he is in for the nation's worst job, what kind of a person he would be when he does it.

But as I said, he is here on official business. He has some interesting things to say to us on the economic front. So I'm going to hand over to him without further ado. Then, as I say, it will be open to questions and the governor is very happy, I think, to go in any direction that we care to take him. So it's a real pleasure to introduce not just an American politician, but an American politician who has gained a reputation in recent years for doing things, and for taking on his political opponents and winning. You will all know – and there's one thing about the recent political history of Wisconsin, that it has been pretty tough. One of the reasons why the governor is in the position that he's in, in the Republican firmament, is that he came out swinging and won. There's a lot of interest throughout the United States in him. He has been mentioned, I think I'm right in saying, 200 times in the last month on Rush Limbaugh's radio programme. You may think that's a good thing, you may think it's a bad, but there we are – it's a thing. Ladies and gentlemen, it's a great pleasure to introduce to you, Governor Scott Walker.

### Scott Walker

Thank you. Thank you all for joining us here tonight. As was mentioned, I'm going to begin with some prepared comments and then have the good fortune to sit down and take your questions, and others that have been submitted and those who will be with us here tonight. But really it's an honour to join with you.

My comments, just like my trip, will be focused on the topic of trade and investment between the United Kingdom and the United States, particularly my home state of Wisconsin. Obviously we live in a global economy so I'm thrilled to be here to talk about how we can work together to become both more free and more prosperous countries. On a future visit, I would love to spend some time not just here in London (although London has been fabulous), to see the rest of this wonderful country.

In particular, as I travel hopefully in the future around the UK, I'd also like to have the opportunity to visit the place where my great-great-grandfather, Thomas Llewellyn, lived before he came to Philadelphia to be

a blacksmith. He was from Merthyr Tydfil in Wales – with a name like Llewellyn, it's hard not to imagine being from Wales. He and his wife, Elizabeth, had nine children, four in Philadelphia and five more when they moved to Chicago Heights in the state of Illinois. It was there that their oldest son married a woman named Ethel Share [phonetic]. That was my great-grandmother. She actually lived to be over 100 years old in Door County, Wisconsin, which is up in our northeastern corner. In honour of my father's Welsh ancestry, my father's name is Llewellyn Scott Walker. For years, people have called him Llew; I always think in America that's spelled Lou, but he actually spells it Llew, because of that Welsh heritage. For years he's used a lion on his letterhead. As a pastor, now retired, he's enjoyed many years of what they call, at least over in our state, Welsh hymn songs, as part of his church over the years. So certainly upon a future visit to the UK, I'm going to make certain that I find a way to go back and see the place where my ancestors first started things out.

Much as my family has a special connection to Wales, the United States and the United Kingdom, I believe, have a special relationship here in the world. Tonight I want to talk about a major part of that strong bond: trade and investment. As Prime Minister David Cameron said at the White House back last month, on the 16th of January, the UK is now the top destination for America and for foreign investment, with 500 projects last year providing 32,000 jobs. America is the UK's biggest trade partner, with exports worth nearly £19 billion. The prime minister affirmed that positive relationship last night when we met at 10 Downing Street. He also spoke of the positive progress that's being made here in the economy, as well as plans to help provide more prosperity for all the citizens of the United Kingdom.

Building on this approach is the basis for our trade and investment trip. So far, over the past few days, we've met with British companies and interested investors to tell the story of Wisconsin. It is a great story. You see, at the start of 2010, the unemployment rate in our state was 9.2 per cent. Now it's down to 5.2 per cent. In fact, this past November was the best month that we've had for private sector job creation since 1990. New business formations are up. Labour participation rates are up. On top of all that, we've poured millions of dollars into worker training programmes to help employers fill their many job openings. In other words, our reforms are working. Wisconsin is the only state in America to have a fully funded retirement and pension system. Our bond rating is positive. Our rainy day fund is 165 times bigger than when I first took office, the largest in the state's history.

The trade relationship with the United Kingdom is also a part of the Wisconsin comeback. For the first time since 2007, the UK now, in terms of Wisconsin trade, is in the top five in terms of markets around the world. In 2014, Wisconsin exports to the UK increased by nearly 25 per cent, and imports into the state from the UK are up about 16.5 per cent. This is good news for either side of the pond. We want to build off of it through 2015 and certainly into the future.

Aircraft parts and other related items to aircraft are a major engine in that growth – a jet engine, if you will – with nearly 160 per cent growth in exports. Wisconsin employers, like Astronautics Corporation of America, Rexnord and Plexus, are heavily involved in these areas. Other companies from Wisconsin are also involved here in the UK. Places like Joy Global and Aarons [phonetic] lead the way in industrial machinery. GE Healthcare, a name you might be familiar with, and National Electrostatics Corporation, in standard imaging, in scientific and medical instruments. Johnson Controls, Rockwell Automation, Miller Electric, and AO Smith in electrical machinery. Case IH Magnum, Oshkosh Corporation and, of course, Harley Davidson in vehicles and parts. In fact, you'll get a kick out of this – on Monday, when I came in, I stopped by Warr's to get a dealership pin, because Warr's here in London is the oldest continuously owned Harley Davidson dealership in Europe. So as a Harley rider myself, I had to get a pin, even while here, with a good Wisconsin brand.

In other words, not just with Harley but with others, we love doing business in the UK. Now we hope to encourage more British employers and investors to take a closer look at the exciting things happening in my home state of Wisconsin. Over the past four years, we've balanced our budgets and lowered our tax burdens on individuals, on employers and on property. In fact, property taxes are now lower on a typical home than they were in 2010. How many other American governors can say that? For those of you interested in manufacturing, we wipe out nearly all of the taxable liability on production by next tax year. Add in a well-trained workforce, great colleges and universities, excellent apprenticeship and worker training programmes, and a world-class supply chain, and you can see why Wisconsin is one of the top states both for manufacturing jobs overall and for the growth in manufacturing jobs in the United States.

On top of all that, the Badger State hosts the Global Water Center near the shores of Lake Michigan and Milwaukee. Our state is home to more than 300 water technology companies. Our state is a leader in power and global industry, in quality healthcare and bioscience, and in the food and beverage industry. Plus Wisconsin – you'd be surprised if I didn't say this – is one of the largest cheesemakers in the world. It's where we get the cheese heads from.

### Justin Webb

I wondered when you were going to get to that – it took a bit of time, actually.

### Scott Walker

That's right. All a matter of time, [indiscernible] I said I'd get to that. It's not just for the Green Bay Packers, which we're very fond of, but because of our cheesemakers. Now, put this in perspective. If my state was a country, it would rank fourth in the world for cheese production, behind the United States, France and Germany, and just above Italy. One state alone. In fact, Wisconsin received nearly 40 per cent of the awards at the 2014 World Championship Cheese Contest. Our cheesemakers swept 11 of the 90 classes, taking the top three prizes in each class.

We want to compete anywhere in the world. That's why we're open to free trade. As I've said to the ambassador many times before, our hope is that there will not be restrictions on geographical indications within the final version of the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership. You see, Colby cheese comes from Colby, Wisconsin. We believe we make it better than anyone in the world but we do not begrudge anyone else trying to make a better cheese. In other words, we say, 'Let the best cheese win'. From my point of view, truly free trade rewards hard work and innovation. We think that is a good thing for the UK and Europe overall, as well as for America. Positive trade relations were a wonderful part of our special bond in the past and I believe they're an important part of strengthening that bond in the future.

Speaking of history, I had the opportunity to speak at the alma mater of former President Ronald Reagan this past Friday. He was a true champion of free enterprise and of free trade. He was also a great believer in the special relationship between the United States and the United Kingdom. During dinner, Tonette and I were seated with his personal assistant for the decade after he served as our nation's president. She showed us the many wonderful pictures of various foreign leaders who came to visit the Reagans over the years after his presidency. None were closer to him than former Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher. Like

our countries, they had a special bond. To honour that friendship and to reinforce the special relationship between our countries, I visited Prime Minister Thatcher's burial site on Monday. It was my honour to pay respects to your Iron Lady.

On Tuesday, just yesterday, we visited the rooms where former Prime Minister Winston Churchill kept track of the war. It made me think of the strong connection between him and President Roosevelt. It made me ponder, of course, on Churchill's famous words that we hear often in our state and across our country: 'Let us therefore brace ourselves to our duties, and so bear upon ourselves, that if the British Empire and its Commonwealth last for a thousand years, men will still say, This was their finest hour'. Just like two dear friends, our countries have stood together and fought two world wars.

Earlier this week, I visited the graves of American and British service members at Brookwood Military Cemetery. The caretakers there shared with me the many stories of courage and valour. They even showed me the tombstones of some of the fallen from Wisconsin. Their sacrifice is what inspires those who venture into harm's way today. I was honoured to personally thank some of those current heroes at Headley Court. As you know, these men and women have lost a limb or suffered a serious injury, and yet here they were, working hard to get back at it. It instantly reminded me of the things I see, of the wounded warriors I've met over the years at Walter Reed back in the States. God bless them one and all.

In closing, I'd like to note that with each of these visits, they reminded me of the special relationship between the United States and the United Kingdom. Initially, that relationship began because of people like Thomas Llewellyn, who came to work in America as a blacksmith and whose great-great-grandson is now the governor of the great state of Wisconsin. That tremendous economic connection between the US and the UK, as Prime Minister Cameron mentioned last month in DC and affirmed again yesterday here in London – that connection is another reason for our special relationship. Thankfully, trade and investment between Wisconsin and the United Kingdom continues to grow. We hope it will expand even more after this trip.

Most of all, our two countries have a special relationship because of our shared values. Together we triumphed over the forces of evil – not once, but twice, during two different world wars. It is why we will conquer the new forces of evil that have affected the world even as we speak today. The graves at Brookwood serve as a permanent reminder of the special relationship between the people of the United States of America and of the people of the United Kingdom. Let the sacrifices of these service members not be in vain. Let us ensure that our special bond is not broken. Together, let us move our countries forward.

Thank you and may God bless you, and may God continue to bless freedom-loving people all across the world.