

John Alexander Interview 30th March 2017

Hallo John thanks for having time with us today. Many people in NSW know some-one in Epping and Ryde especially in the Chinese community because a lot of us live there but many do not understand the concept of a federal electorate like Bennelong could you explain to our Chinese audience in NSW a little about that.

Well Bennelong is a very interesting electorate, I was talking to a colleague the other day, she was lamenting that her electorate was in the Blue Mountains and there was no diversity of culture, and she said it is really boring. We are very fortunate we have a rich mixture of cultures and people have come from all around the world to make their home in Bennelong. I often think it is interesting because the name Bennelong comes from the first Aboriginal man that defended the white settlers, that was the commencement of multiculturalism and now we are an exemplar, a poster child of multiculturalism and we are very fortunate to have a strong Chinese community and it is an interesting thing that both the Consul General has said on a number of times and the Ambassador also our relationship has become more and more deep and profound, we have great diplomatic relations, we have great sporting relations, we have great trade relations but the strongest relationship we can have is when people choose to make their home in a country but maintain that relationship with the country that they come from and that human bridge is the strongest binding factor that we can possibly have. The Ambassador often said we are moving towards the next stage a new phase of our relationship a closer stage than just trade, diplomatic relations and this human bridge one that is so close. And I know that when we have talks with Chinese companies who are interested in developing high speed rail and extol the virtues of high speed rail and the ability of high speed rail to affect strategic decentralisation it is like talking to a big brother who says "We have done this, and look what it does in our country look what it can do for your country, and so I think that is a reaching out to say let us partner with you not just trade with you but partner with you and your development of the next phase, the development of your country. I think that is a great thing.

You mention about trade and setting up home in Australia, Epping and Ryde are two of the favoured places for Chinese to settle, especially Epping these days a lot of new migrants chose to buy their house in Epping. Bennelong you have been trying to say is innovation capital, about innovation what are you saying Bennelong has there?

We say it is the innovation capital of Australia, last Monday night we had an innovation fair from Bennelong, we had many multinational and Australian companies represented from 3M to Microsoft to pharmaceutical companies, Sonartech which is an industry leader in sonar technology and we had schools represented which had competed in the schools competition so this is a very important region, for Australia, produces a great deal of employment, high tech jobs and foreign income, a place that multinational companies seek

to locate, and that is consistent with the mix of people that choose to live in the region and be close to their work.

How do you think the Chinese new migrant or business in China can benefit from Bennelong about innovation?

It is very interesting how things work, the human bridge and the maintaining of culture, the maintaining of language, the maintaining of contact with friends that remain in China, they talk and communicate and the world becomes a closer place and they say "this is what's happening in Australia" "this is what's happening in Beijing" and "where is the opportunity?" so people are alert to those opportunities. A lot of our companies producing medicines in Bennelong are exporting and their biggest market is to China. Cochlear who produce their hearing devices see China as their future biggest market, so those things that are good help and expand trade where everybody wins is a great relationship.