

Kim Beazley's time as Australia's ambassador to the United States came to an end earlier this year, but he is riveted by next week's presidential election.

"When I was the ambassador to Washington I just missed politics every day. In this year, I am missing the United States every day," he says.

Beazley tells Michelle Grattan that "slightly, on balance" Hillary Clinton is more likely to win. "But the anger, the energy, in this campaign is within one group and that is with the white working class - mainly male but also female - who feel that America is being taken away from them," he says.

"I see the election contest at the moment has the momentum with Trump."

He cites the reduced turnout of Democrat-voting African-Americans and the mire of the Hillary Clinton email controversy as factors in a possible upset.

"One would have to say that if there is more of this over the weekend that the Trump momentum may well be unstoppable."

If Trump pulls off an unlikely victory, Beazley foresees huge challenges for Australia. "Were he to implement the policies that he talks about in regards to the Asian region, we would be confronting strategic damage and possibly economic disaster," he says.

Beazley says Hillary Clinton has a very favourable view towards Australia. "She sees us as a skilled, well-off and purposeful people and she will have things for our will and purpose and a lot of them may well involve decisions or topics that we're quite uncomfortable with."

"I think for starters she would be looking very strongly at a deeper integration of Australian and

Politics podcast: Kim Beazley on the US election

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American forces in the region. She might be looking more vigorously than Obama has been at deployment of American aircraft from Australian bases and she'd in all probability look quite strongly at the possibility of rotating ships through [Royal Australian Navy base] Stirling."

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