

You are the fifth largest recipient of Canadian foreign investment. Australia might also be a good location from which Canadians could tackle other markets in the Pacific. I would urge Canadian companies to give careful consideration to forming joint ventures with Australian firms. The good relationship we have in traditional trade is the best basis from which to examine new undertakings such as joint ventures.

The statement by the two prime ministers in March and the seminar this morning all have been intended to stimulate you to think of new ways of doing business with Canada. I have a specific example of firms that show this flexibility, but I can't tell you much about it because the companies involved are in the final stage of negotiations this week. This much I can tell you, however. The Canadian firm has developed a new high-tech electronic device. So has the Australian firm. The Canadian firm's product is unique in that it is the only device to meet certain international standards. But to use the Canadian product you also need a product of the type the Australian firm has developed. The Canadian firm is negotiating with the Australian firm to secure the exclusive world-wide marketing rights to the Australian company's product. Once negotiations are complete — and that could be today — the two firms, acting together, will be able to offer a complete system. It should be a world-beater of a combination.

This is the kind of fresh thinking which could be of real benefit to us both. A small dose of collaboration — industrial co-operation if you will — can make our companies better competitors in world markets.

We in government can make introductions by sponsoring events such as the Canadian technology seminars to be held in Melbourne and Sydney this coming March. We can make the environment for collaboration easier by changing or eliminating regulations when they impede sensible business arrangements. What we cannot do for you is to take on the role that is the entrepreneur's preserve: innovation. You need to find the way to turn a new situation into a profitable arrangement. It can be done, and I am convinced that working closely with our Australian business partners is one of the most promising avenues we can explore....

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