

It's a great pleasure to be here in Auckland. I've had a chance to look around the city a little and I must say it's magnificent. It even reminds me of Canada. Except that you have to cross our whole country to get from sea to sea.

Actually, New Zealand and Canada have a great deal in common, perhaps more than we suspect.

We both have neighbours that are larger than we. But friendly.

We both speak English without the trace of an accent.

We have both been visited by great navigators. Captain Cook. George Vancouver. Greenpeace.

And we are both Pacific countries. So peaceful, in fact, that foreign editors start yawning at the mention of our names. With some exceptions, perhaps, these days.

Then there are our marvellous place names.

You have the Bay of Plenty, we have Fortune Bay.

You have Doubtful Sound, we have Mistaken Point.

You have Spirits Bay, we have Whiskey Lake.

You have Cape Foulwind, we have Blow Me Down.

I know that New Zealanders are among the world's great travellers. Indeed, New Zealand itself is among the world's great travellers. I'm told by geologists that New Zealand wasn't always where it is today. Five hundred million years ago, it was in the northern hemisphere, somewhere off

the coast of China. Three hundred and fifty million years ago, it was in the neighbourhood of South America -- and heading south. One hundred million years ago, it was near the South Pole. And since then, it's been heading back north, so maybe one day you'll find yourselves off the coast of Vancouver.

But for those of you who can't wait for the tectonic plates to get you there, I have good news. I arrived yesterday on the inaugural CP Air flight from Toronto. The flight I was on represented the restoration of direct air links between Canada and New Zealand. Both CP Air and Air New Zealand will be flying the route regularly from now on.

This is excellent. The resumption of direct air service will encourage closer personal contact between us. And that, in turn, will stimulate beneficial business relationships.

I have it on good authority that Auckland is the city of the four B's -- beaches, boats, barbecues and business. That's why I've come, of course, for the business.

And that brings up what else we have in common. Canada, like New Zealand, is a trading nation. Exports bring us 30 percent of our national income, and they bring you nearly a quarter of yours. They are very important to both countries.

The Government in which I have the honour to serve came into office committed to economic renewal. I can assure you that improving our trade performance is at the top of our priorities as we strive towards this goal. It is something we work at very hard. As Minister for International Trade, I consult frequently with my colleagues from the ten provincial governments in