



Statements and Speeches

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CANADA-AUSTRALIA TRADE

Notes for Remarks by the Honourable James Kelleher, Minister for International Trade, to the "Doing Business With Canada" Seminar, Melbourne, Australia, November 6, 1985.

...My visit to Australia this week is, in part, a result of a discussion between your Prime Minister, Bob Hawke, and my Prime Minister, Brian Mulroney, in March of this year. They agreed that Canada would send a mission to Australia led by a minister. Subsequently Australia is to send a similar mission to Canada. Both missions have been instructed to pay particular attention to the opportunities for interchanges of expertise and technology. We hope they will lead to joint ventures, and I'll get into that a little later.

My second motive in coming to Australia is as part of an effort to increase Canadians' understanding of the importance of trade and other business links across the Pacific.

Canada, too, is a Pacific nation. During the election campaign which brought our government to power 14 months ago, Prime Minister Mulroney quite often pointed to the need for Canada to play a full role in commerce in the Pacific region. As the first minister from the new Canadian government to have the privilege of visiting Australia, I can tell you that we are pulling out the stops and getting more and more involved. The Pacific rim is certainly one of the most promising areas for commercial activity in the world today.

Canada, like Australia, is a large land with a small population, and that is a combination that makes us both trading nations. Exports bring us 30 per cent of our national income, and they bring you close to 20 per cent of yours. They are very important to both countries.

The government of Canada is committed to improving our trade performance. We are working very hard to do so. As Minister for International Trade, I consult frequently with my colleagues from the ten provincial governments in Canada. And together, we have developed a national trade strategy.

Perhaps the most significant item on which we reached rapid agreement was that there are two market regions that must get our priority attention — the United States and the Pacific Rim. The importance we give to the United States is no surprise. It takes more than three-quarters of our exports. Indeed, the trade between Canada and the United States exceeds in volume and value the trade between any two other countries in the world.

As for the Pacific Rim, it is the fastest growing region in the world. Canada's trade across the Pacific exceeds our trade across the Atlantic, and it is growing more rapidly. Again, no surprise. Our trade, like yours, was once directed heavily toward London and the Continent. But look what's happened since the war. In Europe, the Common Market has encouraged the Europeans to trade with each other first. And the Pacific Rim has come alive.
