

I am pleased to be able to speak to you today about the interests that your country and mine share, particularly in the area of International Trade. I also want to discuss a subject that is very dear to my heart our hosting Expo 86 last summer in Vancouver and your plans for Expo 88 in Brisbane.

I am not the first Canadian minister to observe that although distant from each other, Canada and Australia have a great deal in common. We are vast, sparsely populated lands rich in natural resources. Though heavily urbanized, we have our share of rugged individuals: pioneers, adventurers bucaners - state premiers: people who have had to fight hard to get by in often difficult and sometimes formidable conditions.

Our respective national myths share strong similarities. Indeed, with minor adjustments for climate and geography, the frontier themes of Banjo Patterson's poems could easily be mistaken for those of Canada's Robert Service.

As leading Members of the Commonwealth, we share a colonial legacy, a common system of government, a concern for human rights, and a respect for the rule of law. At the international level, as middle powers, we have played important and constructive roles in the establishment of rules for the international community in a variety of fields. In the area of trade, both Canada and Australia were founding members of the GATT.

Even before the GATT, as the world lay in the depths of the depression, we sought to reduce barriers to our trade within the Commonwealth. We exchanged preferential tariff rates - an arrangement that has continued to the present day. Since the creation of the GATT, we have worked together to promote our common interests.

Perhaps most importantly, as we look to the future, Canada and Australia are both undergoing a profound change in the way in which we view the world. We no longer regard ourselves as outposts of European civilization, but rather as integral parts of the Asia-Pacific Region. We are leading members of the Pacific community and we have special interests in its future growth and development.

It is to our part of the world that economic power has been shifting. From the Atlantic to the Pacific. Japan, the Asean countries, and an awakening and outward-looking china have become forces with which we must all reckon.