

for the other trading nations of the world. It is our hope that the initiative we are taking with the United States will hasten, rather than impede, a wider and more general easing of trade barriers.

There are obvious similarities between what we hope to do with the States and your arrangement of closer economic relations (CER) with Australia. The disparity in size between the two partners is one of them, and we have been watching your example with interest. There may be other wrinkles we should consider as well as we begin discussions with the United States. We know how the CER works on paper, of course, but the ins and outs of practice might have some relevance for us. I hope that corporate executives I meet in New Zealand will give me the benefit of their personal experience with the CER.

We all have much to share. The complex web of commercial links we simplify and call "trade" has brought us together in ways we could not have imagined a few years ago. The furry and exotic "Chinese gooseberry" of the past, for example, is now the kiwi-fruit, and a Canadian housewife can drive through the snowdrifts to her neighbourhood supermarket to buy it. She may not even know that it was picked halfway round the globe.

Trade is a wonderful thing. It does not force us into paths of uniformity, it allows us to wander away from them. It gives us a means of broadening and enriching our lives, and our nations. Trade is not a zero-sum activity, it is one by which everybody gains. But it is also a fragile web. We must work together to keep it in repair.

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