

INTERVIEW WITH JOHN FLOWER

to QUESTION: Prime Minister, you've just returned from knocking at the EEC's door and yet today Mr. Froggart, the Chairman of Shell, who was appointed/the AIDC only last week, says you should be looking for markets elsewhere. What's your comment on that?

PRIME MINISTER: Well I think we should be looking for our markets everywhere and we are. If you look at the way in which our markets have expanded in Asia -- with countries like Korea and obviously Japan -- you will know quite well there has been an enormous expansion of trade with the emerging developing countries in Asia and the Western Pacific and that goes ahead but you know its saying something of great consequence to many Australian industries if we are to say "alright, the European community, well over 200 million of the world's wealthiest, most technologically advanced people have markets that are to be closed to important Australian products". It's in Europe that we're up against non-tariff barriers that exclude us from their markets. We are not up against such barriers in Asia and other countries where our trade has been expanding in a very satisfactory manner and its obvious therefore, that since in a sense Europe has been the trouble spot that Europe should attract a great deal of attention and its all the more disturbing because many countries in Europe are now behind particular proposals which are designed to break down the most-favoured nation principle in trade and if that happens middle-ranking countries, smaller countries, developing countries would have a great deal to fear from the major power blocs.

QUESTION: Do you see your trip as being worthwhile in what tangible evidence do you bring back to say to the Australian people "this what I've done for Australia, this is what I've brought back for Australia"?

PRIME MINISTER: Australia's view is well known, it's now understood in relation to the wider trade matters and of course Mr. Garland has been continuing to press the particular European matters. There are two strands in what's been happening; entry to Europe on a bilateral basis through the European community and the broader based international trade negotiations being undertaken at Geneva. It's been terribly important that Australia stress her point of view, have it known and understood and also have it known that we are going to be pressing it as hard as we possibly can with great determination. Europe knows that, other countries know that - it was essential that Australia put herself in this position.

QUESTION: Did the Common Market (inaudible), Mr. Jenkins, the President, like what he heard when you put your views to him?

PRIME MINISTER: I wasn't negotiating with Mr. Jenkins and deliberately not, because that had been done with Mr. Gunn

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and at the same time the Commission had said that Australia's bilateral problems should be resolved, dealt with, in the wider forum, in the multilateral forum in Geneva and for the moment we are taking the Commission at their word but we are going to test the validity of the Commission's view that entry for beef and other Australian products can be achieved through sensible and more broadly based arrangements arrived at in Geneva. I told Mr. Jenkins this was the real reason why I wanted to see him; that it would be a grave mistake to underestimate the strength and the determination behind the strength of Australia's view.

QUESTION: Where will you be putting Australia's situation next, at Geneva or the MTN?

PRIME MINISTER: It will be put at MTN and Geneva and we will be arguing very very strongly for agriculture to be included, as we must and we have been assured that the United States will walk away from the negotiations if agriculture is not included. So, at least the United States and Australia are both arguing for agriculture to be included in the final results of the MTN. Now, if that occurs, that will be a major victory for Australia because on previous negotiations, ever since the war, agriculture has been pushed aside - in a sense, into the "too-hard" basket, leaving it open to countries to use whatever restrictive unreasonable rules they like in relation to agriculture.

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