

Prime Minister Interviewed by Graham Dobell, ABC,  
at Belconnen Mall Visual Arts Display by Southwest  
Tourist Authority of Victoria.

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Question

How do you think you are going as a tourist promoter?

Prime Minister

I think Western Victoria is starting to go very well as a tourist promoter because steadily and surely over the last, I suppose, 10-15 years a great deal of attention has been paid to facilities to bring to light and make people aware of many items of interest in Western Victoria. The facilities are there -- the hotel, the motel, the beaches, lakes and the many things which are part of the natural environment. Also there is a very real attempt to build up items of historical interest -- Flagstaff Hill at Warrnambool, you've got the exhibition here on that, which goes back into some Australia's early history and past and some of the interesting things that have occurred. This is getting a response because, especially on the coastline -- Warrnambool, Port Fairy, Portland, do attract many many thousands of tourists in the summer months especially.

Question

Would you, for instance, consider opening Nareen as a tourist attraction at some stage?

Prime Minister

I would have one reservation about that because Nareen to me is a sanctuary. It's a place where ~~(I can and)~~ you can recharge your own batteries and whatever. If it was opened as a tourist resort or something well I think that might disappear. Nareen has been open sometimes for fetes and and charities and one time had 4,000 or 5,000 people through in one day. I've got no doubt that will occur from time to time. I think it's important for me to have some place where I can go which is quiet and out of the way to be with the family occasionally.

Question

How important is tourism to country areas, as an industry?

Prime Minister

I think it's very important. One of the things which made a number of local communities look to tourism much more was the fall-off in rural fortunes and rural profitability in farms. Many people in country towns came to understand that if their only livelihood was going to be servicing dairy industry, or the wool industry or the beef industry, then they could be having an unpredictable future. So a lot of people

Prime Minister: (continued)

with foresight, and Councillor Brophy from Port Fairy is one who has been right in the fore of this movement, thought "that's just not good enough, we've got to build up our own future. Our town's got its own heart" and Port Fairy, Warrnambool, Portland and other towns in Western Victoria have really done just that. They are delightful places to go for a holiday, to take your family, and to get a way from it all for a while.

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