

THURSDAY 20 MARCH 1980

Question

Prime Minister what do you hope to achieve in New Zealand?

Prime Minister

Over a long period New Zealand and Australia have worked to achieve closer economic relationships - trading in particular through the NAFTA Agreement. Now I think there is a consensus on both sides but the NAFTA arrangement has probably gone about as far as it can. It seems to have run its course and if there is to be some closer relationship between New Zealand and Australia a different approach might be required. All of this really began when Mr. Talboys came down to Nareen quite some time ago. But since then ministers have met, officials have met to try to establish a basis for closer developing economic and trading relationships. Now Mr. Muldoon and myself will be reviewing the work that has been undertaken up to this point. We hope we can agree on directions for further work. There will be no hard decisions taken tomorrow. But we do hope that we can agree on the directions for further work that will enable the general New Zealand/Australian relationship to be enhanced and to come closer over the next years.

Question

Prime Minister do you intend talking to Mr. Muldoon about the Olympics question?

Prime Minister

The discussions are on the trans Tasman relationship but when we meet we will talk about a great range of issues - no doubt they will come up.

Question

I can see why it's important for a country like New Zealand to have close relations with us. But what's in it for Australia?

Prime Minister

I think it is important for Australia to have the closest possible relationships with New Zealand. The total market for Australian goods is significantly larger with the New Zealand added to our own. Over the years the close working partnership between Australia and New Zealand has been very much to the advantage of both countries, not just for the smaller country, New Zealand.

Question

Prime Minister if I may come back on the Olympics - the Swimming Union, the Athletics Union in the last two days have gone against your wishes. Does it concern you that there is a trend that way?

Prime Minister

Oh and the House of Commons overwhelmingly went our way. Thank you very much.