

Canada, A Pacific Nation

I am pleased to be here today and to have this opportunity to address the annual meeting of the Pacific Basin Economic Council. On behalf of all Canadians, I would like to extend a warm welcome to our visitors, and particularly to the Prime Minister of New Zealand, Sir Robert Muldoon, and wish you all a pleasant stay in Vancouver, Canada's gateway to the Pacific and the site of Expo 86.

Canada is a Pacific nation. A decade ago our trans-Pacific immigration exceeded our trans-Atlantic immigration for the first time. Two years ago our trans-Pacific trade surpassed our trans-Atlantic trade for the first time. The trends are clear.

The Canadian Government means business in the Pacific. The region is vital to us and we intend to be an active participant in its future. We will continue to invest in its political stability. We will pursue economic policies designed to enhance trade, investment and technology flows across the Pacific. Relations with the Pacific nations will be a priority on our international agenda.

During the 1970's, most countries of the region experienced spectacular annual growth rates, in the order of six to ten percent. While the recession has rolled back the indicators somewhat, projected rates of growth for the rest of the decade still exceed the most optimistic projections for Europe and North America. Japan is now the second largest market economy in the world and is Canada's second largest trading partner. And nowhere else in the world has there been such sustained achievement by developing countries. The newly industrialized economies of Asia -- Korea, Singapore, Taiwan and Hong Kong -- are setting an example of economic achievement for the developing world to emulate.

The growth and vitality of the region depend on the free flow of ideas and commerce. Total trade between Canada and the Pacific nations increased three-fold over the last decade. Trade with Korea alone increased by ten times during this period. Canada has been a reliable source of industrial raw materials and agricultural products, as well as of advanced technology and manufactured goods.

Increasingly, business is being done in the region by joint ventures, by co-investment and sharing technology, by building on complementary skills and comparative advantage. Canadian firms are major