

exchange of personal experience in academic, cultural and other fields. Such exchanges build better mutual understanding at the level of individuals, and by increasing awareness, general public support for more involved relationships between nations.

Increased information flows serve other purposes as well. In showing countries of the region that we have a distinct culture and lifestyle of our own, and in welcoming the ongoing exchange of experience with these countries, we give tangible evidence of support for their desire to preserve and share with us the richness of their traditional values and societies in the face of increasing contacts with a fast moving world of compelling change. These forms of activity also can provide an avenue for easy communication in sometimes difficult circumstances. Who can forget China's use of "ping-pong diplomacy", or ignore the bridges Canada has built with the help of the National Film Board? If commerce subsequently flows over these bridges, so much the better.

I am sure you are all aware of the adage that no one does business with a stranger. It also seems rather obvious that we will not advance the broad range of our economic objectives unless decision-makers in the region are aware of Canada as a sophisticated, multicultural, industrial country.

Let us not forget that a better knowledge and appreciation of Canada and Canadians, through the dissemination of information, exchanges of artists and exhibits, academic cross-fertilization and other programs are a fundamental part — the "mortar" some have called it — of substantial long-term relationships, including those in the trade and investment fields.

Other countries in the world have long recognized the validity of this argument. The British and French governments have supported the activities of the British Council and the Alliance française for over a century. In the Pacific region, those consummate traders, the Japanese, have had a Japan Foundation in place for a decade; more recently they have made cultural and educational exchanges a main area of activity for any Pacific Community primarily designed to deal with economic questions.

There is no question in my mind that Canada must move with more assurance and vigour into the business of increasing understanding of Canada in Asia and Pacific countries, and in developing a greater awareness of those countries among Canadians. We need to build public support for the relationship both abroad and at home; they are two sides of the same coin.

As I have mentioned on a number of occasions, increased coverage of the Pacific by Canadian media organizations would also be a significant step forward. So far, Canada has full-time correspondents in two cities only: Peking and Tokyo — and only recently in the latter, a move which I have applauded.

From this perspective this Conference may have a very special importance in demonstrating the extent of support within the ranks of businessmen and others for the basic broadening of our relations with the Pacific region....