

1959 and a return visit by Prime Minister Diefenbaker in 1960. Return visits at all levels of government have occurred over the past two decades. In 1968 a joint Mexico-Canada Committee at the ministerial level was created to provide a forum for periodic consultations on bilateral issues. The Committee's first meeting took place in Ottawa in October 1971.

Trade

Mexico has a rapidly growing economy with an eight per cent growth in 1980 and a gross domestic product (GDP) of \$119 billion (US). Its major exports include petroleum, coffee, metals and manufactures. It imports machinery, chemicals and auto parts.

During the 1960s, Canadian exports to Mexico more than doubled while Mexican exports to Canada more than tripled. In the 1970s the trend continued and, between 1973 and 1979, Canada's exports to Mexico doubled and imports increased by two and-a-half times. In the past two years the growth in two-way trade has been even more dramatic.

In 1980 Canada's exports to Mexico increased to \$482.8 million, more than double the 1979 level. Imports from Mexico increased to \$345.3 million, up 65 per cent from the 1979 level. Canada's imports included crude petroleum, coffee and telecommunications equipment while the major exports to Mexico were dairy produce, eggs and honey, steel, railway track material, asbestos and wheat.

In an attempt to ease its dependence on the USA, Mexico has developed its own "third option" policy, naming Canada as one of five industrialized countries with which relations should be intensified. In these circumstances Canada is in a good position to provide Mexico with North American technology. In particular, Canada can offer the highly advanced communications and transportation technologies sought by Mexico. Mexico has the uranium resources to allow for a major nuclear energy program which could include large-scale co-operation with Canada. There is also considerable potential for transfer of agricultural technology and natural possibilities in the petroleum sector.