

1. CANADA AND CHINA

The emergence of China as a world power is one of the most important aspects of recent international politics. Canada's establishment of diplomatic relations with the People's Republic of China in 1970, and her part in the assumption by Peking of China's seat in the United Nations, are among the most significant accomplishments of Canadian foreign policy of the last two decades.

The background to these developments can be summarized briefly. In April 1949 the People's Liberation Army entered Nanking, then the capital of the Nationalist Government, where the embassies of foreign governments were located. Among these was the Canadian Embassy, for at that time Canada recognized the Nationalist Government. The occupation of Nanking symbolized the end of Canada's old relationship with China.

During the following two decades, Canada's relations with China were at best limited. It was clear from the beginning that the Peking Government was effectively in control of its territory and people, and therefore met some of the classic tests for recognition. Successive Canadian governments between 1949 and 1968, therefore, examined the possibility of entering into official relations. But for years, there were serious obstacles to doing so: hostilities in Korea and the atmosphere of bitterness that followed, and the fact that the authorities on Taiwan and the Peking Government both claimed to be the sole legal government of China.

In 1966, instead of voting against the annual resolution proposed by Albania in the United Nations, which would have given the China seat to Peking and unseated Taipei, Canada shifted to an abstention.