



In 1967, the only contact with the Chinese Government was through the Chinese Chamber of Commerce. Robert Godson, then Assistant Trade Commissioner, recalls the informal diplomacy.

tions dwindled. The Trade Commissioner and his staff put away the emergency evacuation plans and property prices began to rise. But no one who lived through that summer, and contrasted it with the glowing reports of Expo '67 and the Canadian Centenary, would ever forget.

In 1968, with the retirement of Prime Minister Lester B. Pearson, Pierre Elliott Trudeau became Prime Minister. Trudeau had visited Hong Kong before – once as a student just after the War – and returned that year as the first Canadian Prime Minister to ever tour the Far East. Godson recalls that true to his media image, Trudeau was youthful and fascinated with everything he saw.

Charles Gallow arranged a boat trip for the official party out of Aberdeen after a long day of official functions. On board, Trudeau brought the conversation around to wanting to go out to a disco that night. Godson was delegated to accompany the Prime Minister. The Prime Minister was staying at the Mandarin Hotel and excused himself from an official dinner that evening. The local press hung around the lobby, hoping for a quote from "Trendy Trudeau". But that evening, Godson led Trudeau and his advisor, Ivan Head, with a mournful Mountie dutifully in tow, out the back of the hotel and then to dinner in Wan-chai. The Royal Hong Kong Police arranged for one of their boats to take them over to Kowloon, and the popular discotheque at the Peninsula Hotel. They returned to the Manda-

rin at about 2:00 am, and thinking that the Press had dispersed, Godson led them in by the main entrance. Hearing that Trudeau had not attended the official dinner, one reporter had lain in wait and waylaid him as they ran up the stairs to the elevator. The next morning, "The Star" featured Trudeau dashing up the stairs followed by Godson and Ivan Head with the Mountie bringing up the rear. The caption ran "Where Was Trudeau Last Night?".

But it was at the Canton Fairs that the Canadian Trade Commissioners really earned their salaries. Comparable to medieval trade fairs, the Canton Fairs were held in the Spring and the Fall, at a time in history when few foreigners had other contacts with China. A full 50 percent of the country's foreign trade was done at the Fairs, and places were widely sought after. All who were allowed to attend knew they would be subject to the savagery of the Red Guards. In 1967, thousands of Red Guards forced two diplomats to kneel in the mud and subjected them to chantings of Maoist thought. Even getting a visa to cross the border was made inconvenient. Godson was called one night at 4:00 am to say that if he wanted to attend the Fair, he had to be on the Canton train that same morning.

Once there, all foreigners were kept in the same hotel for a month, completely out of communication with Hong Kong. Each trader was only allowed access to the official