

B. Coordination

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If we are truly resolved, as a nation, to enter fully into the life and future of the huge Pacific community, . . . we must do so by a unified national effort. It is difficult for close-knit, nationalistic societies of the region, such as Japan, to understand the Canadian penchant for speaking abroad in a multitude of voices, some of which, on occasion, create a discord. (11:23)

34. The above quotation, from the testimony of the Canada-Japan Trade Council, succinctly summarizes perhaps the main theme emerging from the Committee's whole inquiry. Different witnesses repeatedly stressed that even in economic relations, where Canada's involvement is broad and well-established, this country suffers from the diffuse and uncoordinated character of its national dealings. A national policy of fuller and more active participation in Pacific affairs is unrealistic unless Canada is prepared to assert a unified national presence and pursue consistent and coherent national policies.

35. In part this need derives from the fact that the Pacific remains to most Canadians, a kind of "Terra Incognita". When venturing out into what the Prime Minister has called, "the New West" it stands to reason that Canadian explorers—official, commercial, or academic—should share the benefits of their particular knowledge and experience. It is also a simple fact, as the witnesses have stressed, that in dealing with the two giants of the region, China and Japan, (and increasingly with other countries), political, commercial and other relationships are inseparably mingled.

36. Clearly such an environment demands re-thinking and new approaches on the part of Canadians. The trade mission was cited as an example of the kind of technique required for successful collaboration between government and industry, and it is notable that the mission to Japan in January, 1972, was the largest economic mission that Canada has ever sent anywhere in the world. As Mr. Robert Bonner pointed out, however, the trade mission "is only the first thrust of the effort". Continued collaboration is required in the "follow-up" stages. While there has been no evidence to suggest that Government facilities are generally lacking in this regard, it must be recognized that they will face rapidly-increasing demands in coming years. "Facilities", however, are less the issue than "attitudes". Patterns of cooperation between industry and government are still hampered by mutual lack of knowledge and often suspicion. A related problem is the lack of communication and cooperation among Canadian businesses themselves. Testimony indicated that these problems lead to a costly "fragmentation of effort" in Canada's economic relations with Pacific countries. Specific references and a discussion of remedial possibilities will be found in a later chapter on "Canada's Economic Interests".

37. Similar gaps appear to exist between academics concerned with the Pacific and businesses and government departments sharing that interest. Once again, there are probably deep-rooted prejudices involved on both sides, but they clearly must be overcome. There should, for example, be continuing institutional contact between the Canadian Society of Asian Studies and the business groups concerned