

The two Prime Ministers agreed that, in view of the increasing importance of Canadian-Japanese relations, there should be established a Canadian-Japanese Ministerial Committee, which would not be a negotiating body but would provide a valuable means of contact between ministers of the two countries. The activities of the Committee would consist primarily of visits of ministers to each other's country from time to time to exchange views on matters of common interest, particularly in the economic field, and to familiarize themselves with the problems of the other country.

In his formal opening statement Foreign Minister Ohira referred to the fact that "Japan and Canada, both as neighbours across the Pacific and as members of the free world, have grown in intimate friendship in recent years", and he expressed the hope that "this ministerial meeting will help to bring our two nations into closer relationship and bear rich fruits of friendship".

In his reply Mr. Fleming referred to the "very high importance" the Canadian Government attached to the establishment of the joint committee of the two governments. Speaking of the friendly relations which had developed between Canada and Japan, Mr. Fleming said:

The broad waters of the Pacific Ocean have narrowed in recent years and we have become increasingly aware that Canadians and Japanese are close neighbours. Japan is in the forefront of those nations that cherish the ideals of freedom and democracy. We Canadians have observed with gratification the increasingly effective role played by Japan in international affairs. We have watched with admiration the extraordinary economic progress of your country.

Mr. Fleming noted that the "broad and comprehensive" agenda before the Committee was not indicative of the existence of problems between the two countries but attested rather "to the extent of our common interest and attitudes". He pointed out that both Canada and Japan had "enormous interests" in world trade and that the bilateral trade between Canada and Japan was of large and growing proportions:

Canada values Japan as a principal customer for our wheat and industrial raw materials. We welcomed the expansion of trade between the two countries which has followed our Trade Agreement of 1954.

Mr. Fleming concluded his formal opening statement by expressing his "firm conviction that this first meeting of the Canada-Japan Ministerial Committee will pave the way for even greater co-operation and understanding between our two countries".

During the course of their meetings, the Canadian and Japanese ministers had a full, frank and very friendly exchange of views on a number of subjects, including recent developments in international trade and economics, bilateral trade between Canada and Japan and questions concerning fisheries on the North Pacific Ocean.

Final Communiqué

The first meeting of the Canada-Japan Ministerial Committee was held at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Tokyo, on January 11 and 12, 1963.

Canada was represented at the meeting by Honourable Donald M. Fleming,