

Yokohama and Shanghai followed on swiftly in the next few years. In 1929 one of Canada's first diplomatic posts abroad was our Legation in Tokyo. On the human side, an inflow of Chinese helped open the Canadian West, while a later substantial outflow of missionaries provided many Asians with their first close look at Canada and Canadians -- and gave Canadians their first real sense of involvement in the problems of Asia.

And who could not, in more recent times, remember the role of Canadian troops in Hong Kong in the Second World War, and later in Korea? In working for peace and stability in the region we have participated in various forms of control commissions in Indochina, and we have contributed to the economic development of the region through the Colombo Plan, the Asian Development Bank, and bilateral aid programmes.

Canadian provincial governments have also made significant contributions to Canada's presence and activities in the region. And so has Canada's private sector, both through a long record of trade, investment and other business activities, and more generally through strong Canadian participation in the Pacific Basin Economic Council since 1967.

While much of this is history, it provides a solid basis on which to write an even more illustrious future chapter. This will require, however, co-ordinated and well-defined policies and activities which are better fashioned to focus on, and respond to, a myriad of conditions and situations -- political, economic, cultural and social. The formation of innovative new approaches to the Pacific poses an enormous but exciting challenge to contemporary Canada, and to this Conference in particular.

In developing new directions we must, first and foremost, come to terms with the sheer size and complexity of the Pacific world; this very diversity makes it impossible to delineate, let alone implement, one set of policies applicable to all countries.

At one end of the spectrum are states who are just entering the modern world; at the other end is Japan, the world's second largest free market economy. The globe's four great religions are spread across the face of the region, along with a profusion of languages, cultures and races. The distances are vast, and communication and transportation links are often as far-flung as they are expensive.

In a region that boasts over one-third of humanity, the earth's most populous nation, China, is part of the same neighbourhood as the South Pacific state of Nauru, one of the world's