

of us who are interested in these questions have been approaching the political issues of membership, organization and the community's eventual responsibilities in a deliberate and careful spirit, but with open minds and in a positive fashion.

Needless to say, your discussions on Friday on the Pacific Community will inevitably have an impact on Canadian views concerning this concept, and on the positions we take in exchanges with our Pacific friends. In fact, I look to this Conference to provide new momentum and direction in public thinking generally about the Pacific, for use as a basis of policy formation.

The truth is that we still lack, in Canada, a well-developed public sense of where we are going and what we should be doing in the Pacific. Until very recently we have been overwhelmingly an Atlantic nation in outlook -- turning East to our European roots and history, our traditional flows of trade, and our major security considerations; looking South to the American colossus, our closest friend and ally and the mainstay of our economic well-being. Canada, Europe and the U.S.A. have been inexorably linked together in our national psyche and in the main themes of our foreign policies.

Yet, this situation is changing, and changing rapidly. Much has to do with the new economic wealth and political influence of Western Canada, which for many years has seen the Pacific as the corner-stone of its prosperity. The westward shift in national focus has also brought Central and Eastern Canadians to a new appreciation of the Pacific. It has reminded us all that even before Simon Fraser and Alexander Mackenzie reached the Pacific Coast overland, the westward thrust to the Orient -- the search for the Northwest Passage -- was an integral part of Canada's history. The magnetism of the Pacific has continued as an irresistible force ever since: without it, Canada as we know it, would not, in all probability, exist.

In 1843, for example, Canada's first Pacific venture of the modern era was the founding of Fort Victoria on Vancouver Island, only three years after the establishment of Hong Kong. Our first transcontinental railway was called the Canadian Pacific, and in the early years of this century -- and even before -- Canadian Pacific Empress liners linked Vancouver with the Orient, Australia, and New Zealand in a vast imperial marine highway -- the White Empresses now supplanted by the Orange Empresses of our flag carrier in the Pacific.

Canada has been historically associated with the Pacific in many other diverse ways. We opened our first commercial office in the region in Sydney in 1895. Melbourne,