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CANADA'S ASIAN POLICY

A Speech by the Honourable Paul Martin,
Secretary of State for External Affairs,
at the Fourth Annual Banff Conference on
World Affairs, Banff, Alberta, August 26,
1966.

... I understand that your discussions have centred chiefly around those Asian nations on the Pacific Coast or facing the Pacific. I shall, of course, devote my main attention to that area also. Nevertheless, I should like to define in the broadest terms what correctly should be called Asian policy. It is Asian because it deals with events of this current era, mainly in China and Southeast Asia, which cast their shadow and send their political and economic reverberations across that mighty continent and down to the islands of Australasia.

The extent of Canadian involvement and public interest in Asian affairs, either in the Pacific region or elsewhere, has grown markedly over the years. It is important to remember, however, that official Canadian awareness of the nations over the Pacific, interest in their affairs and involvement in international questions in which the interests of Canada and of Asian and other nations were at issue, has origins early in our history.

I do not need to remind a group with a close interest in Canadian and international affairs of the nature of some of those interests. It is enough to say that Canadian Governments have long been aware of the necessity of formulating some guiding principles for the advancement of Canadian interests in Asia and of following closely the developments there likely to have a significant bearing on our external policies generally.

A short time ago, I read an article by Professor A.R.M. Lower, which dealt with the role played by Loring Christie and Arthur Meighen in persuading the British Government to abandon the Anglo-Japanese Alliance of 1902. In this, one of Canada's first ventures into the waters of the Pacific, the Canadian Government's tightly-reasoned argument prevailed in London and cleared the way for the Washington Conference of 1921-22. In his memorandum to Mr. Meighen, which Professor Lower has brought to light, Christie recognized that the United States might take credit for this major change in British policy, and boast about "assuming the moral leadership of the English-speaking world". Christie curtly dismissed this possibility in the following terms: "Let them. If our