



PRESS RELEASE

DEPARTMENT OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

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The Department of External Affairs announced today that the Canadian Government had informed the Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers and the Japanese Government that it would agree to the establishment of a Japanese Overseas Agency in Canada. Similar Japanese agencies are now operating in four key cities in the United States and in other countries in Europe, Asia and South America.

The Agency will be limited to semi-consular and commercial functions and neither the Agency nor its personnel will have diplomatic or consular status. It will not act on behalf of the Japanese Government in making official representations to the Canadian authorities except for the administrative conduct of the Agency itself.

The main functions of the Agency will include:

- (a) semi-consular functions including assistance to Japanese nationals residing in Canada in matters of Japanese citizenship and property regulations which may concern them;
- (b) the supplying of trade and travel information to Canadians;
- (c) the promotion of trade between Canada and Japan.

The appointment of Japanese official agents abroad was discussed for some months in 1949 in the Far Eastern Commission, the policy-making body for Japan on which Canada is represented. With the exception of the Soviet representative, general approval was expressed for the limited participation of Japan in international relations prior to the conclusion of a peace treaty, under the authority of the Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers. It was generally considered that Japanese participation in the work of international bodies and contact with other countries would contribute to the aims of the occupation.

The trade promotional activities of a Japanese Overseas Agency in Canada should work to the advantage of both countries by increasing the flow of trade between them and by helping to eliminate some of the difficulties that have arisen in the past due largely to a lack of information about regulations or market requirements. It will complement Canada's official trade representation in Tokyo which was re-established in 1946.

It is expected that the Japanese office will be located initially in Ottawa.