

Minister -- to Seattle for a meeting with Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) leaders in mid-November 1993, and to Mexico in March 1994.³⁰ These initiatives marked the first time in twenty years that a Canadian Prime Minister led a trade promotion mission, since Pierre Trudeau visited China. The first Team Canada tour in November 1994, grouping together the Prime Minister, nine provincial premiers (Québec's Jacques Parizeau refused to participate), Trade Minister Roy MacLaren, Secretary of State for Asia-Pacific Raymond Chan and roughly 400 business leaders, went to the Far East to visit China, Hong Kong, Indonesia and Vietnam. In January 1995, a somewhat scaled-down version of Team Canada (roughly 200 business leaders) headed for Latin America, visiting Trinidad, Uruguay, Argentina, Chile, Brazil, and Costa Rica. In January 1996, the third Team Canada mission targeted South and Southeast Asia, touching down in India, Pakistan, Indonesia and Malaysia. In January 1997, the apparently annual winter Team Canada pilgrimage took politicians and business leaders (including, for the first time, the Premier of Québec) on a whirlwind tour of the Republic of Korea, Thailand and the Philippines. Finally, in January 1998, with participation interrupted (and cancelled in the case of Québec's Lucien Bouchard) due to Eastern Ontario and Québec's ice storm, Team Canada returned to Latin America. Each of these trade promotion tours has been greeted with great fanfare, and reports of millions if not billions of dollars in contracts, commercial agreements, and letters of understanding between Canadian businesses and international partners.³¹

Of the Team Canada missions, there is no doubt that the first trip to China was the most successful and attracted the greatest attention, both from the Canadian public and from Canadian business. That trade trip was characterized as a "\$9-billion orgy of [contract] signings" and the participation of more premiers and twice as many firms as those in subsequent trade missions.³² In most respects, the huge economic payoffs reaped in China were obviously the result of months and years of work by individual