

the aim of his Government to recognize the People's Republic of China as soon as possible and to support the right of that Government to occupy China's seat at the United Nations.

How quickly times change! When the newly-elected Government undertook a review of this country's China policy, some expressed doubts. We were asked why a change was necessary. Such questions seem inconceivable today. Events have shown how well-timed the Canadian move was. In this, we anticipated history more accurately than some of our friends. At the time, we said Canada had to act in accordance with the realities of international life. The Government in Peking was the effective government of China. It had been so for almost 20 years. How could we have gone on ignoring this fact? This seems obvious now. It was less so to many people four years ago. But in the intervening years, following Canada's example, and generally for the same reasons, close to 30 nations have established diplomatic relations with the People's Republic of China. How much credit can Canada take for this turn of events? I cannot say. The Chinese certainly believe Canadian action was influential. I am satisfied, anyway, that the Government made the right decision at the right time.

So we had decided to negotiate with the Chinese about recognition. The next puzzle to many people was, why was it taking so long? The Sino-Canadian talks on recognition lasted 20 months. There is no great secret about the reason for this. The problem was Taiwan. From the very first meeting in Stockholm in February, 1969, the Chinese side made clear to us their position that Taiwan was an inalienable part of the territory of China. This was a principle to which the Chinese Government attached the utmost importance. We too made Canada's position clear from the start: the Canadian Government neither endorsed nor challenged the Chinese Government's position on the status of Taiwan. This remains Canada's position to this day.

After much discussion, both sides agreed to a joint communiqué. On the status of Taiwan, it said simply: "the Canadian Government takes note of this position of the Chinese Government". This formula, or one something like it, has been used during the last two years by most of the countries which have followed Canada in establishing relations with Peking. The sino-Canadian communiqué of October 13, 1970 was the world première of a performance repeated many times since. The formula we worked out with the Chinese has entered the jargon of specialists as "the Canadian formula". Like so many important things, it all seemed so simple once it had been worked out. But remember: working out this simple formula took almost two years of steady work.

I was proud to announce to the House of Commons that Canada had recognized the People's Republic of China. It was an historic moment. A decisive step arising from the Government's review of foreign policy had taken place.

But I was very much aware that this was just a first step in the development of relations between Canada and China. Even between 1949 and 1970, despite the lack of official relations, there had been contacts in a number of fields. Wheat sales had already made our trade relations with China important. Apart from trade, a few Canadians had travelled to China in those years, seen for themselves something of the Chinese experience, and established contacts with Chinese people. This had been possible, even in the absence of diplomatic relations, because the Canadian Government, unlike some, never put restrictions