

donate 150 books on history and literature over a period of five years, but China has refused a book-exchange program. Concerning sports, the Chinese want to receive Canadian gymnastic, figure-skating and swimming teams. In exchange, they will send Chinese boxing, basketball and volleyball teams.

The Canadian representatives were pleased with these Peking agreements, but there seemed to be some doubt as to how they would work out in practice. The trade agreement did not incorporate any specific commitment, and here, as in immigration and medicine, the subsequent attitude of the Chinese must be known before any definite conclusions can be drawn. What the Canadians are saying at the moment seems to be that China is defining a new set of relations with the West and that these are merely the opening moves.

Image of Canada

Canada certainly has a role in the power-play between Washington, Moscow and Peking, but it is not yet clear exactly what it is. When I asked Canadian officials what they thought China's image of Canada was, they seemed unable to give a definite answer. The Chinese seem to have drawn the veil on this subject, as on many others. However, these officials did feel that the Chinese might view their new relations with Canada as an experiment that would provide them with valuable insights into the attitudes of the other Western countries.

When I asked the Chinese (interpreters, reporters and table companions) the same question, their answers were always much more vague and could be roughly summed up as follows: "China wants to maintain good relations with Canada because Canada is a friendly country; all countries, large or small, are on the same footing." Several of them even went on to add that, as a reporter, I had a very great responsibility in promoting friendship between the Chinese and Canadians; and, indeed, one thing the trip taught me is that the Chinese know almost as little about the Canadian way of life as Canadians know about life in China.

In fact, almost all the Chinese with whom I came into contact asked me as many questions about Canada as my colleagues of the press and I asked them about their country. The same curiosity was found at the official level. Chairman Mao Tse-tung and Premier Chou En-lai asked Mr. Trudeau many questions about Canada, such as its geography, climate, the Arctic, French-speaking Canada, and

so on. In short, progress continues on the path towards mutual understanding.

Stepping-stone to U.S.

In any case, in the present international context, in which President Richard Nixon often seems to be better appreciated in Peking than in Washington, it seems that China regards Canada as "a window on the Western world" and, more specifically, as a stepping-stone to the United States. I was given to understand that Chang Wen-chin, present Ambassador of China to Ottawa and one of Premier Chou En-lai's chief advisers, will be the first Chinese Ambassador to Washington. Someone even remarked to me before the visit that he was not sure that the Chinese saw the difference between Canada and the United States. It can be assumed, therefore, that one of Mr. Trudeau's main objectives was to show the Chinese that Canada is not a carbon copy of the United States.

Among the factors that led China to choose Canada as a testing-ground when it opened the door to the West, were of course, the memory of Dr. Norman Bethune, the wheat sales in the 1960s, and — in particular — the presence of Pierre Trudeau as head of the Canadian Government. This was Mr. Trudeau's third trip to China. The first time was in 1949, when he wanted to get a close-up view of the revolution. In 1960, he returned with a group of Montreal friends, and subsequently wrote a book in collaboration with Jacques Hébert entitled *Two Innocents in China*.

When he returned to China 13 years later as Prime Minister, Mr. Trudeau found that his opposite number, Chou En-lai, had taken the trouble to read this book. At a banquet in Peking, the Chinese Premier said in a toast to Mr. Trudeau that he was "an old friend of China". Some Canadians had the very strong impression during the Peking talks that the Chinese wanted to establish a "personal relationship" with Mr. Trudeau, in a somewhat similar fashion to that between the Soviets and industrialist Cyrus Eaton in the past, and all were gratified at the frankness with which Chou En-lai spoke of his country's development, as well as of his government's present-day concerns at the foreign as well as the domestic levels.

Reporters had little opportunity to probe major international problems during the trip. We should have liked to discuss the United States, the U.S.S.R., Vietnam, Cambodia, Japan, Cuba and so on, but there were too many questions to be asked

China appears to see Canada as stepping-stone to United States

Impression grew during talks that Chinese aimed at creating 'personal' links with Trudeau