

Premier Chou also raised the question of establishing an air service between China and Canada during Mr. Pépin's visit. At the initiative of the Canadian Government, negotiations leading to a civil air agreement began in Peking in May 1972 and the agreement was signed in the spring of 1973. The designated carrier, CP Air, hopes to begin the operation of the air link in the not-too-distant future.

A year after Mr. Pépin's visit, the Secretary of State for External Affairs, the Honourable Mitchell Sharp, made an official visit to China. He had extensive talks with the Chinese Foreign Minister and had a meeting with Premier Chou En-lai. Mr. Sharp opened the Canadian Solo Fair in Peking, the largest commercial fair ever held by Canada abroad. It was a very successful exhibition of Canada's technological capabilities and marketing potential in a wide variety of fields.

Subsequent visits were made by other Canadian Ministers: a Petroleum Mission led by the Honourable Donald Macdonald in April 1973 and a Scientific Mission led by the Honourable Jeanne Sauvé in September 1973. The pattern of official Canadian visits to China culminated in a highly productive mission to the People's Republic by Prime Minister Trudeau in October 1973.

Discussions during the course of the Prime Minister's visit resulted in important bilateral agreements or understandings in trade, consular affairs and reunification of families, as well as on a wide range of bilateral exchanges.

The trade agreement provided for the formal exchange of MFN treatment and the establishment of a joint Trade Committee which now meets annually. The Chinese also agreed to consider Canada as a source