

their deliberations and discussions is an acknowledgement that the Asian and Pacific world is a reality not only for those on the West Coast but for all Canadians.

The Pacific dimension has been with us from the beginning. The first French explorers on their way up the St. Lawrence recalled the original motive in the European discovery of North America when they named famous rapids at Montreal "Lachine" or "China". Although the fur trade soon subsumed the energies of European explorers, the dream of a route to the Pacific persisted and it reached fruition in the creation of a Canadian nation extending "from sea even unto sea". Canada's Pacific vocation, however, did not end there. From the earliest days of Canadian nationhood we have had commercial representation in the region. In 1929 Tokyo was the third Canadian diplomatic mission to be opened.

The maintenance of peace and stability in Asia and the Pacific has been a major preoccupation of the Canadian Government for many years, beginning in the '40s and '50s when Canadian troops participated in the defence of Hong Kong and in the United Nations action in Korea; in another part of Asia, Canadians served on the Indochina Control Commissions. At the same time, the need for social and economic development was not neglected. Canada was a founder-member of the Colombo Plan and through this and other agencies, such as the Asian Development Bank and ESCAP, we have conducted programmes of bilateral and multilateral development assistance in the region. On the cultural and academic side, too, the contact between Canada and Asia has been noteworthy. One need only mention the splendours of the East Asian Collection of the Royal Ontario Museum here in Toronto and recall the endeavours of Bishop White and others who shared the Canadian missionary experience in Asia. Such is the legacy of our rich and diverse historic relationship with the Asian and Pacific region.

Significant though these endeavours were, they represented only the beginnings. We are now moving to define a new relationship that will take account of the size and complexity of a region that is home for over one-third of the human race and which comprises countries ranging in size from the world's most populous to some of the world's tiniest mini-states. The region's diversity embraces all manner of political systems, all the world's major religions and a myriad of languages and dialects.