

train, car and boat, and for a hundred yards or so by bicycle -- is that China is first and foremost an agrarian society. All the Chinese officials who spoke to me constantly stressed this. They all set their first priority as agriculture -- second, light industry, and third, heavy industry. This emphasis on agriculture, on food production, is evident everywhere. Others have said it before me, but now I can say it from my own observation: China is a garden. There is not a square inch of arable soil that is not cultivated. My picture of China is of people in the fields working, planting, harvesting, weeding, fertilizing, irrigating, making the best possible use of the land. What the Chinese have achieved in the countryside is enormous. Chinese agriculture is not yet mechanized -- at least, not by Canadian standards. The Chinese are, however, aware of the need to simplify some tasks by letting machines do the work. Gradually, tractors and more sophisticated agricultural tools and equipment are being introduced. But such tools or machines are more likely to bear the stamp "Made in the People's Republic of China" than any other.

This is because the Chinese are determined to become and to remain self-reliant. China does not intend to depend, economically or politically, on other countries. This has some significance for Canada's political relations with China but more for our commercial relations; only if we understand that point will we be successful in trading with China. Self-reliance and foreign trade are not mutually exclusive. As China's standard of living rises, as China increases its capacity to meet its own needs, so also will China's capacity to import. Of course, the Chinese Government will not leave its imports to chance, any more than it does now. Imports will be planned, and planned with a view to making China self-sufficient. If I could leave one idea with this audience, it would be this: China wants the capacity to look after its own needs. If we can contribute to that capacity, then we will be successful.

The third very strong impression I had is that China is determined to take its place in the world, a place in keeping with China's size and its importance. Yet its leaders disavow any intention of assuming the role of a super-power. The Chinese make much of this point: they say they are not now, nor will ever be, a super-power. But how does one measure power? Super-power or not, China is a great country. The Chinese have already begun to have a profound effect on the course of events in the world. They will surely continue to do so.

Canada has made surprising progress in the development of its relations with the People's Republic of China during the past two years. I think the prospects for a greater exchange of goods, of services, of ideas and of people, are excellent. We can continue to build on the foundation we have laid because China's leaders and the Chinese people think well of Canada. Of course, there are deep and obvious differences in our social and political systems. But the Chinese have confidence in their new relationship with us. This basis of confidence and mutual respect will enable our two countries to develop not only our trade but all those ties that are the foundation of a civilized international order.