

Affairs at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the PRC, and as Ambassador to the Republic of Ghana and to the United Arab Republic.

Since the establishment of diplomatic relations and the exchange of ambassadors, relations between Canada and the People's Republic of China have proceeded relatively smoothly. A significant step was taken in the summer of 1971, when the Honourable Jean-Luc Pépin, the Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce, led an important delegation of Canadian officials and businessmen to the People's Republic of China. This mission, the first Canadian Government mission to visit China, sought to establish close contacts with Chinese ministers, officials and business representatives in all spheres of economic and commercial activity. This objective was fully achieved. During the three working days the Canadian group spent in Peking, no fewer than 25 separate formal meetings were arranged with representatives of each of the seven State trading corporations responsible for China's export and import trade, with the People's Bank of China and with the China Council for the Promotion of Trade.

One of the most significant achievements of Mr. Pépin's mission was China's agreement "to consider Canada first" as a source of wheat. In addition, the Canadian Government agreed with the Chinese to exchange missions in areas of particular commercial interest to both our countries, to hold trade exhibitions in each other's country and also to hold periodic consultations on trade matters. In the course of this visit, China's then Minister of Foreign Trade, Mr. Pai Hsiang-kuo, accepted an invitation from Mr. Pépin to visit Canada. Mr. Pai visited Canada in August 1972, and opened the Chinese exhibition at the Canadian National Exhibition in Toronto.