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DRAMATIC GROWTH IN CANADA'S PACIFIC TRADE

An Address by the Honourable Mitchell Sharp,
Minister of Trade and Commerce, to the Pacific
Northwest Trade Association, Anchorage, Alaska,
September 13, 1965.

As Minister of Trade and Commerce I have a keen awareness of the positive role of international trade as a crucial factor in national prosperity. Because of our greater dependence on export markets than the United States this interrelationship is especially important for Canada. I am also keenly aware of the importance of trade as a positive and constructive factor in political and general relations between countries and peoples. It seems to me self-evident that the dangers of unnecessary misunderstanding can be reduced through the knowledge and mutual awareness that accompany contacts through trade. It will be obvious how greatly I value the role of businessmen engaged in international trade -- men who, day by day, extend and broaden the channels of profitable and fruitful contact throughout the world.

It is as it should be that you, the business leaders of Western Canada and the western part of the United States, should come together to exchange views and to focus attention on the development of trade with our neighbours around the Pacific rim. This trade, already large, will, I believe, be of increasing importance to both our countries in the years to come. I am happy to report that throughout the breadth of Canada there is a growing appreciation of the importance of our Pacific as well as our Atlantic involvement. More and more eyes are turning towards the West as they look into the brightness of the future.

To this audience, there is little need for me to elaborate in detail on the potential of trade in the Pacific region and the importance of seizing the opportunities. Canada's trade with this region has shown dramatic growth over the past decade. Our wheat sales to the area have increased from about \$60 million in 1954 to nearly \$540 million in 1964. Japan is a traditional and most valued market for Canadian wheat. We have been able to develop new and substantial outlets in mainland China for Canadian grain. A part of our grain sales to Russia moves out through Pacific ports and enters the Soviet Union through their Pacific ports. In 1963-64 and again in the current crop year, wheat and flour sales to our traditional customers and to our more recent customers in Eastern Europe and Asia involved movement of the maximum volume of wheat we can physically handle through our existing facilities.