

MOVING CLOSER

When Singapore Airlines' (SIA) Big Top flew into Vancouver for the first time on 1 July, Canada's national day holiday, another chapter was opened in the development of the relationship between Canada and Singapore. The two countries will quite literally move closer together, as the travel time to Canada's Pacific Gateway will be reduced to less than 17 hours.

Of course, travel between these two Pacific neighbours has been getting easier for several years. Air Canada pioneered direct service in 1985, flying from Toronto to Singapore via London and Bombay. This route quickly proved to be so popular that Air Canada increased the frequency of its service from three to four flights weekly. However, even this was insufficient to meet demand.

"We recognized significant potential for more cargo and high-yield passenger traffic," said Mr R. St Maurice, Air Canada's regional general manager, "so we replaced our TriStars with 747's Combis. This gives us a 100% increase in first and business class seats, together with a significant increase in cargo capacity."

For visitors travelling from Canada to Singapore via Far East way points, Canadian Airlines International provides a popular service, flying direct from Vancouver to Hongkong six times a week, daily to Tokyo, and thrice weekly to Bangkok.

So the stage is set for an increase in both business and personal travel. Recognizing this, the Singapore Tourist Promotion Board will open an office in Toronto in July, in order to promote Singapore as a holiday destination and as a convention venue.

In Singapore, the Canadian High Commission plays an active role in promoting Canada as a destination, and it is probably only a matter of time before SIA's Singapore Girls lend a hand in this by being seen on television screens strolling misty-eyed through Old Montreal or gazing in wonder at the Rocky Mountains or Niagara Falls.

"We're looking forward to an expansion of trade between Canada and Singapore resulting from increased travel. We have always found that travel and trade go hand in hand," commented Canadian High Commissioner to Singapore Sean Brady.

Canada and Singapore, both being dependent on trade for their livelihood,

Proposed: Canadian Transit System for Bangkok

In June, the Honourable Pierre MacDonald, Minister of External Trade and Technology of the Province of Quebec, was in Bangkok for an official four-day visit. The purpose of his visit was to promote further trade and investment between Thailand and the province.

While in Bangkok, Minister MacDonald met with officials and representatives from the Government of Thailand to discuss a Canadian designed 36km Transit System proposed by Lavalin International Inc. to the Expressway and Rapid Transit Authority (ETA) of Thailand.

Lavalin International, in association with firms from Thailand and Japan, is amongst three finalist consortia bidding for the First Phase Bangkok Mass Transit Project to ETA. If retained, the consortium will be responsible for the construction, operation and maintenance of the Transit service for a period of up to 30 years.

Minister MacDonald said, "The Canadian Transit System is unique amongst bidders in that it will consist of fully automatic trains scheduled at close headways and of lightweight design resulting in lower overall capital and operating cost." This will result in a higher level of service at the lowest cost for the Thai users of the system.

According to Mr Petitpas, one of the two Lavalin International vice-presidents who accompanied Minister MacDonald, "Lavalin International is well-known to ETA. We have been working with them since 1984 when we completed a Transit Feasibility Study which recommended the development of the Bangkok System on a build-own-operate basis."

This state-of-the-art system, designed and built by Lavalin, is presently in use in Vancouver, Toronto and Detroit, and performing so satisfactorily that it is being extended in Vancouver while more cars are being added in Toronto.

Canadian Airlines' New Office in Bangkok



Canadian Airlines International recently opened its new Bangkok office on the sixth floor of the Maneeya Centre on Ploechit Road. The opening ceremony was officiated by Canadian Ambassador Lawrence Smith.

Photo shows (from left) Berli Jucker senior vice-president Poul Weber; the airline's general manager for Thailand, David Solloway; Ambassador Smith; Berli Jucker president E. Rodel; Pacific Leisure general manager Manob Song-Im; and the airline's secretary to the general manager, Warawanna Chillanond.

can only benefit as trading routes shorten, and as travel increases knowledge of opportunities in what used to be regarded as far-off markets.