

- We have embarked on a program to open up new air services to the Asia Pacific region, and we have succeeded dramatically: new routes to China, Korea, Thailand, Singapore, India and the Philippines have been negotiated, as have most recently new services from Vancouver to Nagoya and eventually Osaka and a new non-stop route between Toronto and Tokyo.

- We have broken ground for our new Embassy in Tokyo, which will house not only our own federal government but our provincial and private sector partners in a magnificent showcase for Canada.

These are among the steps that we have taken over the last few years.

I believe that we are well launched on the path to developing in our own country most of the attitudes and approaches necessary to seize the opportunities the "Pacific century" is likely to offer us. The steps we have taken are real and will bear fruit - indeed they are doing so already. But that is only the beginning. Much more needs to be done.

There are five broad areas where we should be developing new programs aimed at making Canada an important economic and political partner to Japan and other key countries of the Asia Pacific region. I offer them to you as ideas that can form the basis of the next set of Canadian initiatives with Asia and the Pacific - ideas which my colleagues and I intend to explore further with the provinces and the private sector.

First, we must improve the teaching of Asian studies in Canada, particularly languages and cultures. That includes every aspect of Asian society - history, culture, economics, language, the way they think and they way they act. If our business and governmental leaders of tomorrow cannot understand or communicate with our Asian partners, we will be left far behind other countries which can.

In Australia today, more than ten times as many young people are studying Japanese as in Canada. The United States, Britain, France and Germany also outpace us as well. We will need to do more if we are to compete equally in this challenging environment. I would see language and cultural awareness studies taking a number of forms:

- Applied language and business practices courses for the business community;