



# STATEMENTS AND SPEECHES

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## CANADA AND THE PACIFIC

Speech by the Honourable Mitchell Sharp,  
Secretary of State for External Affairs,  
to the Foreign Correspondents' Club,  
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... Here in Tokyo, one naturally thinks of the Pacific face of Canada. Large numbers of Canadians, however, have their foreign gaze firmly fixed eastward on Europe - when they are not preoccupied with events on our own North American continent and our very close and rather special relation with the United States. The origins of most of our people, our culture, our politics, our history, our exploration, our trade have all combined to weave Canada's destiny intimately into that of the great Atlantic community.

But this is not the whole story. Some of the earliest explorers pushed across the northern half of our sprawling continent in part to find the Pacific and another trade route to Asia. It was not an easy task and nature often imposed difficult barriers. One such natural obstacle was the rapids in the St. Lawrence River near what is today Montreal. They were named La Chine - China - as a testimony to the ultimate goal of those early explorers from France.

As our transcontinental nation was formed, and as the Western provinces of Canada grew and prospered, they began to look as naturally across the seas to the Orient and Australasia as the older provinces looked back across the Atlantic to Europe. The government policy-makers of the late nineteenth century hoped that Canada would become an essential link in forging new channels of commerce and communication between Europe and the nations of Asia and the Pacific. Trade - and missionaries - began to draw us in that direction too. The first Canadian trade commissioner arrived in Yokohama shortly after the First World War and one of Canada's first diplomatic missions abroad was established in Tokyo in 1929, one year after we established a legation in Paris, two years after we opened in Washington.

There is, therefore, a long history of Canadian interest in the Pacific countries, particularly Japan. But it was not until after the Second World War that Canadians as a whole became aware of the Pacific as they had been of the Atlantic - as a natural focus for our trading interests and for the definition of our international personality. This growing consciousness of the Pacific is attributable in economic terms to the amazing progress of Japan, to the continuing development of other countries on the "Pacific rim" and to the

remarkable growth in the extractive and manufacturing industries of Western Canada. Over the past 30 years developments in Asia have also brought home to Canadians as never before the realization that Canada is involved despite our apparent geographical remoteness. The upheaval in China following the Second World War, the Korean War, and more recently the Vietnam War, have prompted Canadians to be concerned with the way in which the world's peace and security is affected by events in East and Southeast Asia. All this has led to a fresh recognition of the obvious fact that Canada is a Pacific as well as an Atlantic nation, and to a reassertion of this fact as a firm principle of our foreign policy.

I cannot tell you in precise terms how we propose to translate this general assertion into tangible policies. In our comprehensive review of Canada's foreign policy, we have in this area of the world concentrated so far only on the question of China and have still to tackle the broader question of our relations with Asia and the Pacific at large. In any case, the evolution of foreign relations in a democratic and pluralistic society is to a great extent a natural and organic process, especially for a country such as Canada, which has neither the power nor the desire to impose solutions. In reformulating our relations with the Pacific community, we are dealing in many instances with forces which are beyond our capacity to control, and in this sense Canada's role is responsive - I hope our part will be constructive and not without influence, but inevitably it will not be that of a prime mover. Our policy must be a response to felt needs and interests; but these are growing in Canada, and therefore it will be incumbent upon our Government to take deliberate steps to guide and quicken our relations with the countries of the Pacific.

### Japan

Foremost among the countries with which closer Canadian ties are being forged is Japan. In economic terms this country has come to be of tremendous importance to Canada. Japan is at present our third-largest trading partner, competing for second place, and bilateral trade between Japan and Canada last year amounted to almost \$1 billion. We have traditionally been large-scale suppliers of the basic primary commodities required by the Japanese economy. But we are also anxious to secure a greater opportunity for our producers to compete with more highly-processed products in the Japanese market, and we look to the disappearance of impediments, many of which are out of date in the Japanese economy of today, to our export trade in these goods and in agricultural products.

In the other direction, Canadian imports from Japan have since the conclusion of the first Canada-Japan Trade Agreement in 1954 increased more than sixteenfold. The vast majority of these imports are fully manufactured goods, and there are times when sales of a few Japanese products occur at levels which cause disruption in the Canadian economy. We feel obliged to state our position frankly in such cases, and we expect an understanding reaction from our Japanese friends. The healthy state of our relations and our shared interests are such that they can readily withstand these differences. There has also been a substantial increase in the amount of Japanese investment in Canada in recent years. We have noted with satisfaction Japanese participation in the development of natural resources in British Columbia and Alberta and we should welcome more Japanese investment, particularly in our manufacturing industries.

Important as these economic relations are, I should not want to leave the impression that they are the be-all and end-all of Canadian relations with Japan, or that the quality of our appreciation of each other as nations can best be measured by ringing up mutually profitable sales, each on his own cash register. This is far from being the case. Japan was a major exhibitor at Expo 67 in Montreal, on the occasion of Canada's centennial, and Canada was the first country to agree to be an exhibitor at Expo 70. In Osaka, Canada will be represented not only by the Federal Government's pavilion but also by the pavilions of three of our provinces - British Columbia, Ontario and Quebec. Visitors of all sorts - tourists, businessmen, officials, politicians - are moving in increasing numbers between Canada and Japan; some 15,000 Canadians came to Japan last year, and many more are expected in 1970. Canadian students, scholars and artists come here to study the great cultural and artistic heritage of this ancient land. The Toronto Symphony Orchestra - conducted, I might note, by Seiji Ozawa, who has become famous in North America - is at present performing in Japan, the first such tour by a Canadian orchestra.

Our deepening relations in non-governmental fields, and the rapidly-growing importance of Japan as a world power, have as their natural concomitant an even closer political relation. Bilaterally in the current Ministerial Committee Meeting and in individual meetings with federal and provincial Canadian cabinet ministers, multilaterally in the close collaboration which exists between Japanese and Canadian delegations in all the major international organizations to which we both belong, we find ourselves exchanging ideas with the ease and frankness which reflects mutual respect and a broad similarity of approach to many problems. In the political field our co-operation is particularly close in the United Nations and its agencies. In the economic field, it expresses itself especially in our mutual interest, as non-European powers, in the OECD and the GATT. Both of us have the U.S.A. as our chief trading partner and both of us are concerned lest the economic world of the developed countries become a U.S.-EEC dialogue.

### China

In recent months, the Canadian Government has, as you know, undertaken a complete review of Canadian policy towards China. This is, in part, a reflection of our awareness of Canada as a Pacific nation, since no consideration of the area could be complete without close attention being paid to this vast country containing almost one-quarter of the world's population. The Canadian Government's plans stem from the public statement made on May 29, 1968, by our Prime Minister, Mr. Trudeau, to the effect that, if his Government was re-elected, it was his intention to open discussions leading to recognition of the government in Peking. After several months of intensive study within our own administration and discussion with some interested governments, the decision was taken to have our Embassy in Stockholm approach the Chinese Embassy in that city with a proposal that we enter into substantive discussions. We have now had a Chinese reply to that approach and we hope that the discussions in which we are about to engage in Stockholm will lead in due course to the exchange of diplomatic missions.

Perhaps this would be an appropriate occasion to explain why, despite the reservations that have been frankly expressed to us by some friendly countries, we have come to the conclusion that it would be desirable for Canada to seek diplomatic relations with the People's Republic of China at this time.

Briefly, the reason is not unlike that offered by a distinguished mountaineer when asked why he continued to attempt the conquest of Mount Everest: "Because it is there!" The effective Government of China is, and has been for almost 20 years, the Government in Peking. For much of that time, Canada has been expanding and developing relations with China in a number of fields, and in some of them - particularly trade - our relations with China have become important to us. But if China is important to Canada, one has only to open a newspaper almost any day to appreciate that China has come to occupy an important, perhaps even critical, position in today's world. If a stable basis for peace in the world can be found, it is clear that China must participate in the finding. If Asian problems are to be solved, China must take part in their solution.

Given these facts, and the growing importance of China both to Canada and to the world, the question is not really "Why should Canada recognize Peking?" but "Why should Canada not seek diplomatic relations with the world's most populous nation?" In our view, the normal, logical and reasonable thing would be to have diplomatic relations with a country of such importance. However, since the issues involved are obviously highly controversial ones in the international community, it had been the position of the Canadian Government that it might be more appropriate for a country such as Canada to place first priority on a resolution of these problems in the context of the United Nations. In the absence of such a solution, it is now our best judgment that whatever uncertainties and disadvantages there may have been are unlikely to outweigh the arguments for trying to normalize our relations with the People's Republic of China.

In the Canadian Parliament and elsewhere, I have, in the months since the Canadian Government's intentions with respect to China were first declared, been asked many questions on the position of Taiwan. I have not been able to give a great deal of satisfaction to my questioners in Canada in this respect and I am afraid I shall not be able to tell you a great deal either. Clearly, the nature of our relations with Taiwan must change if we enter into diplomatic relations with Peking, for one cannot maintain diplomatic relations with two regimes both claiming to speak for the same country. What exactly these subsequent relations might be I cannot say, for this does not depend on the decision of the Canadian Government only. As for the status of Taiwan, it would be presumptuous for the Canadian Government to pronounce upon it one way or the other. The status of Taiwan is essentially something for the Chinese to work out, for both Peking and Taipei now regard Taiwan as a province of China. As I said in the Canadian House of Commons, when we recognize other countries we do not necessarily recognize all their territorial claims or challenge them, and we have the same approach to Taiwan.

We are fully aware that the Government of Canada and the Government of Japan view the question of recognition of Communist China in a somewhat different light - and we recognize that our interests may well be different. We have, however, kept in close contact with the Japanese Government as our plans developed and have listened carefully to what they had to say. We shall continue to do so, and we hope that they understand the reasoning which has led us to this step.

#### Vietnam

Another major anchor-point in Canada's Asian-Pacific perspective is our presence as a member of the International Control Commissions in Vietnam,

Laos and Cambodia. Nowhere in our foreign policy is our concern for the stability of Asia more manifest than in these peacekeeping commitments which, when they were established 15 years ago, were pioneering ventures with few precedents if any to guide them. In agreeing to undertake this assignment, Canada was furthering no national interest in the narrow definition of the term. Our hope was that we might be able to contribute to the process of re-establishing stability. Our continued participation in the Commissions reflects the interest of successive Canadian Governments in precisely the same objective. This commitment has not been an easy one. Measured in terms of foreign service manpower alone, an astonishing 34 per cent of the officer strength of my Department has served in one or more of the three Commissions. In this and other respects, our responsibilities in that part of the world have been enormously demanding. They have also been discouraging and disappointing and clearly devoid of the results intended. The dangerously expanding hostilities of the sixties in Vietnam have demonstrated that the objective is as far from being met as it was 15 years ago. It may be even more remote, for it will take time for the passions of war to subside and the scars to be healed.

We hope the discussions now in progress in Paris are part of an irreversible process, the final outcome of which will be what Southeast Asia so badly needs - a stable and durable political settlement, fair to the legitimate interests of those involved, unjust to none and above all mutually acceptable to everyone. That may be a tall order. It is not unrealistic in the sense that anything short of an adequately defined and workable political settlement would only invite a tragic repetition of the events which flowed from the basic flaws of the settlement made in Geneva 15 years ago. In the re-establishment of peace, and in ensuring that new political understandings are carried into effect, there may well be an important role for international guarantees and an international presence designed to moderate the situation and to help re-establish a working measure of confidence between those so recently in armed conflict. It is impossible to say at this stage whether Canada might make an effective contribution in such a context. Much would depend on whether we were asked to play such a part by all those directly involved. It would also depend on whether the tasks to be carried out, and the means available for doing so, gave such an assignment a realistic potential for a worthwhile contribution. I do not intend to sound unduly negative or pessimistic, or to imply that Canada is seeking to avoid all forms of commitment or involvement simply because they may prove frustrating or difficult. Far from it. What does concern me, however, is the need to avoid unproductive commitments which tend to freeze problems rather than help solve them.

### Conclusion

Let me, in conclusion, take a brief look ahead at Asia and the Pacific as a whole. I foresee a Pacific area where what are at present the more economically-developed countries - the United States, Canada, Japan, Australia and New Zealand - will continue to expand trade among themselves and will also co-operate with the developing countries to encourage greater trade, investment and aid. Much of this will occur in the private sector, but, in so far as Canada is concerned, where government action is appropriate, we intend to adopt a constructive approach which reflects our role as a Pacific nation. We have in Canada a long tradition of interest in the Pacific. The rapid economic development of Asia and the Pacific, the increasing understanding of its importance to world peace and stability and the greater awareness of Asia's contribution

to the world's culture and civilization - all of these are combining to ensure a more active Canadian attention to this great area so that new links will be forged to add to the old ones for the greater benefit of all of us. And in this we look forward to the continued and increasing co-operation with Japan symbolized by the Ministerial meetings which have brought my colleagues and me to Japan today.

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