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Associate Editor Michael Newlands
Designer Li Kin Nang/Eddy Cheung**Publication committee**
Victor K. Chan (Chairman)
Kelly Edmison
James Lawrie
Ernest Loignon
John Treleaven**Canadian Business Association of
Hong Kong**
G.P.O. Box 1587, Hong Kong
5-225962**President** Jim Lawrie
First Vice President John Treleaven
Second Vice President Victor K. Chan
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Hong Kong, and the Asian countries of the Pacific rim, have recently been the focus of a great deal of activity from Canada. Three provincial premiers, Bill Davis of Ontario, Peter Lougheed of Alberta and Grant Devine of Saskatchewan visited the colony and neighbouring territories in bids to boost exports and attract investment. Federal International Trade Minister Gerald Regan was also here in May for the same reasons. The potential that Canadians see in the Hong Kong market is further highlighted by Canadexpo '84, a solo Canadian trade show which will take place in May next year. The interest in Hong Kong in particular and the region in general is part of a Canadian effort to boost exports worldwide with the Pacific rim being seen as the market of the future, second only to the major US market. The export drive has been boosted by the formulation of a new trade policy, and last month was designated as Canada's export month. The seven separate sections of this issue's cover story link the general Canadian export effort with the visits to, and activities in, Hong Kong.

COVER STORY

Scope for Hong Kong, Ontario Joint Ventures

By Michael Newlands

A call for Hong Kong companies to diversify into Ontario was made by the Canadian province's premier, William Davis, in a speech to the Canadian Business Association.

In the wide ranging speech Mr. Davis, making his second visit to Hong Kong in 12 years as premier, pointed out that Ontario is the colony's largest trading partner in Canada and has absorbed more immigrants from Hong Kong than any other Canadian province.

He made an analogy between Ontario and Hong Kong, saying that they are both gateways to larger markets with Hong Kong serving Southeast Asia and China

while Ontario's strategic location in the centre of Canada makes it the gateway "to the entire North American consumer and industrial market."

Recognized as one of the most successful politicians in Canada today, Mr. Davis has spent most of his adult life in politics with the Progressive Conservative government which has ruled Ontario solidly for 40 years, and his repeated successes at the polls have shown that he is still popular with the public. At the last election in 1981, when the recession was causing high unemployment and crippling interest rates, the polls showed that his personal popularity was well ahead of his party's.