

market will include exporter education, niche marketing activities, leading-edge technology and the promotion of strategic alliances.

We have announced an exciting new program called Access North America to help Canadian firms capitalize on growing opportunities not only in the U.S. but in Mexico as well. This \$27-million initiative, undertaken in co-operation with the private sector, will provide Canadian firms with the tools and counselling they need to succeed in the North American marketplace.

We are also looking forward to CanadExpo '94 in Mexico City next March. With more than 400 Canadian firms on board, it promises to be Canada's biggest trade show ever in Mexico.

The Government is collaborating with the private sector in other constructive ways. For instance, in co-operation with the Canadian Chamber of Commerce and other organizations, we have developed a program to train Canadian business people in the language, culture and business practices of Mexico. Graduates then go on to the NEWMEX program. That stands for New Exporters to Mexico. It is a practical, jointly funded effort to introduce export-ready Canadians to the Mexican market.

But there is more to Latin America than just Mexico. That is why Prime Minister Campbell announced plans to establish a Blue Ribbon Commission on Latin America and the Caribbean. This independent commission will comprise leaders from the business, academic and labour sectors. Their task will be to report on how Canadian jobs and Canadian business can be secured throughout the Hemisphere.

Business and government are already working more closely to build strong trading relationships, not just in North America but in the dynamic economies of Asia as well. Just two days ago I attended the inaugural meeting of the Canada-Japan Industrial Co-operation Forum in Toronto. This forum will forge mutually beneficial partnerships between Canadian and Japanese firms in three areas of industrial co-operation: trade, investment and technology.

As our second-biggest export market, I don't need to remind you how important Japan is to Canada. Last year Canadian merchandise exports to Japan amounted to more than \$7.4 billion and could hit \$8.4 billion this year.

We also have a comprehensive Action Plan for Japan, developed in co-operation with business, the provinces and other government departments. We are concentrating on seven sectors, including information technology, auto parts and agri-food, to take advantage of Japan's increasing demand for value-added imports.