

and students. Three ingredients are thought to be essential to plot Osaka's future: a core group of companies strong in particular fields, people willing to invest money and a strong research capability. With the first two definitely well in place, the Science City is expected to add the third.

The second major project, the Kansai International Airport scheduled for completion in 1993, will be the first of its kind in the world, built on a man-made island reclaimed from Osaka Bay. Due to pollution and noise problems at the existing airport, and to avoid environmentalist pressure which plagued Tokyo's new airport at Narita, an offshore location was seen as the only alternative. The added advantage is that the airport will operate around the clock, something Tokyo can never have. Passenger volumes are expected to increase to 5 times current volumes by 2010 but it is the 13 times current volumes expected for air cargo that will create the biggest impact on local business.

Technoport is the third and perhaps most imaginative project which will impact on the Kansai and catapult it into the next century as a major international centre. Simply put, the concept is to plug Osaka and the Kansai into the information sources of the world. In addition to hotel, conference, cultural, and residential facilities, Technoport will receive and consolidate information for distribution by optical cable throughout Osaka's subway and rail system. Not only will it promote Osaka as one of Asia's financial centres, but the coordination and distribution of technological, trade and transportation information may even serve to lure some of the head offices from Tokyo where the word staggering is no longer strong enough to describe land prices.

CANADA COMES TO THE KANSAI

Our new Consulate General in Osaka was established as part of the Government's National Trade Strategy and is Canada's first-ever such consular office anywhere in Japan. A temporary office was opened in an Osaka hotel in January 1986 and the Consulate General was inaugurated that November in a new building on Osaka's main thoroughfare. There is currently a total staff of nine: three rotational Canadians (the Consul General, one Consul and one Vice Consul) and six locally-engaged Japanese (two commercial officers and four support staff).

The territory covered by the new office is the Kansai area of central Japan: a seven-prefecture region; Osaka, Hyogo, Kyoto, Nara, Wakayama, Mie and Shiga. Though small geographically, this region has a total population of about 22 million, most of it concentrated in the cities of Osaka, Kobe, Kyoto and Nara. The region is Japan's second-largest industrial, financial, commercial and population centre after Tokyo, accounting for 20% of the Japanese economy and, correspondingly therefore, about 2% of the free world's GNP.