

Privatization, in the broad sense of the term, will continue both at the federal and provincial levels.

Among the foreign shareholders of privatized Argentine companies, by country of origin, Canada is situated in an important sixth place, after the United States, Spain, Chile, Italy and France, according to recent studies as of September 30, 1994. Canadian participation is now 3.15 percent of the general total, with an amount of US\$ 287 million.

This ranking excludes, among others, the later initial public offerings of 30 percent of the shares of Telecom, Telefonica, Central Puerto and Central Costanera, and the 45.3 percent share of YPF.

## **TRADE LIBERALIZATION**

Firm and rapid strides have been made to open the economy:

- Nontariff barriers to imports and exports have been removed.
- The import tariff structure was simplified and duty levels were sharply reduced, ranging from zero to twenty percent. These percentages are compatible with the MERCOSUR negotiated foreign common duties implemented as of January 1, 1995.
- All restrictions and discriminatory procedures that slowed the entry of capital goods have disappeared.
- Export taxes have been eliminated and, in strict accordance with international accepted rules, internal taxes are being rebated to exporters in direct proportion to their impact on value added.

## **FOREIGN TRADE**

As a direct result of the economic recovery program carried out by the government of Argentina, and its politics of open markets in foreign trade, a significant growth in Argentine global imports has been observed during the past four years. The enclosed tables reveal the sharp jump in import values, which went from US\$ 4.077 million in 1990 to US\$ 16.786 in 1993. During the first ten months of 1994 imports increased 29% in relation with the same period of 1993.