

THE HUMAN LINKS BETWEEN HONG KONG AND CANADA ARE VERY STRONG. 13,300 HONG KONG STUDENTS ARE NOW STUDYING IN CANADA, 53% OF WHICH ARE ENROLLED IN CANADIAN UNIVERSITIES. HONG KONG IS CANADA'S LARGEST SOURCE OF IMMIGRANTS, AND CANADA CURRENTLY WELCOMES MORE THAN TWICE AS MANY IMMIGRANTS FROM HONG KONG AS ANY OTHER COUNTRY. CANADA ISSUED 20,000 IMMIGRANT VISAS TO HONG KONG RESIDENTS IN 1988. THESE NEW CANADIANS HAVE HELPED TO BUILD OUR COUNTRY, AND HAVE GIVEN NEW IMPETUS TO CANADA'S EFFORTS TO PLAY AN ACTIVE ROLE IN ASIA AND THE PACIFIC. I AM CONFIDENT THAT IMMIGRATION FROM HONG KONG WILL CONTINUE TO PROVIDE SIGNIFICANT CONTRIBUTIONS TO CANADA.

THESE HUMAN LINKS HAVE DRAMATICALLY STRENGTHENED, IN RECENT YEARS, OUR OWN AWARENESS OF CANADA AS A PACIFIC NATION. THIS PROCESS HAS BEEN HELPED BY THE WORK OF ORGANIZATIONS SUCH AS THE CANADIAN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE IN HONG KONG, AS WELL AS BY CANADIANS OF HONG KONG ORIGIN SUCH AS LT.-GOV. DAVID LAM OF BRITISH COLUMBIA, AND ADRIENNE CLARKSON.

IN FACT, IT WOULD BE INTRIGUING TO SPECULATE ON THE POSSIBLE SIZE AND DIVERSITY OF OUR TRADE WITH THE WHOLE ASIA PACIFIC REGION IF HONG KONG-CANADA RELATIONS WERE REPLICATED WITH MORE OF OUR TRADING PARTNERS IN THE REGION!

ALTHOUGH IT WAS NOT ALWAYS THE CASE, THE DYNAMIC GROWTH IN ECONOMIC POWER OF THE EAST ASIAN ECONOMIES HAS FOCUSED THE MINDS OF CANADIANS ON THE PACIFIC REGION AS NEVER BEFORE. CANADIANS ARE USED TO ASIA BEING THE DOMINANT POPULATION CENTRE OF THE EARTH, BUT ONLY RECENTLY HAVE WE BEGUN TO UNDERSTAND WHAT IT WILL MEAN WHEN ASIA CONSTITUTES SOMETHING LIKE 40% OF GLOBAL CONSUMPTION. TEN YEARS AGO, ONLY 34% OF CANADA'S NON-U.S.A. TRADE WAS WITH THE ASIA-PACIFIC REGION; NOW THE FIGURE IS 50% AND RISING. IN 1988, TWO-WAY TRADE WITH THE REGION WAS \$36 BILLION, WITH EXPORTS MORE THAN \$17 BILLION.