

It is a pleasure to be here today to exchange ideas about exporting with members of the Toronto Board of Trade's International Trade Committee. I would like to focus my remarks on small and medium-sized enterprises — or SMEs, as they are inevitably dubbed — and some current and forthcoming initiatives we are taking to support their efforts to become export-ready and then ultimately successful exporters.

Let me first commend the Board of Trade for launching last spring a series of International Trade Success Roundtables featuring corporations that have made a mark in the international marketplace.

No one city or region has a monopoly on entrepreneurial or exporting expertise and initiative in Canada, but the Toronto area certainly has its share.

I met some of the best of these business people at the Canada Expo '94 trade show my department organized in Mexico City last spring. The Canadian team at that show even included a Prime Minister who is deeply committed to fostering exports, and keenly aware of the potential of SMEs to do yet more than they already are doing to make global markets take notice of Canada.

The Prime Minister was certainly the most high-profile member of the Canadian contingent at Canada Expo '94. But it was representatives from 427 companies from across Canada — including many from Toronto — who were the real stars at the largest Canadian trade show ever staged in a foreign country.

The show attracted some 20 000 Mexican business people — and proved to be an excellent investment, generating projected sales of about \$100 million, based on contracts signed or in the works over the next year.

One of the big winners was a firm from the Toronto area, the Yogen Frusz chain of yogurt franchises. It is satisfying to know there is a small Canadian flag perched on the counter of each of the 15 franchises Yogen Frusz has opened in Mexico over the past year.

Another successful Toronto firm that comes to mind is Webb Zerafa Menkes Housden. It will soon be making Canada a part of the landscape in China, which I will be visiting along with the Prime Minister, several provincial premiers, and a large contingent of Canadian business leaders in November.

Webb Zerafa is designing the ultramodern Shanghai Securities Exchange Building. The Exchange will be an "intelligent" building, incorporating showcase craftsmanship and information technology.

These are companies that grasp the big picture. They are acting on a key insight, that new global trends, technologies and trade