

Since 1970, Asia's share of global output has doubled. Since 1970, trade within the region has grown 10-fold. By the end of the century, the Pacific may well contain 60% of humanity, 40% of global consumption and an even larger share of global production.

There is no disputing the basic fact: the center of global economic activity is shifting towards the Pacific, and it is shifting fast.

That is of particular significance to Canada, and to our future prosperity as a nation of traders. In 1983, Canada traded more across the Pacific than we did across the Atlantic. And that will be the pattern as far into the future as we can see. British Columbia now trades more across the Pacific than it does with the United States. And Canada as a whole relies more on our economic relation with Japan and the four Tigers than does any other member of the 24 nation OECD. We depend on the Pacific more than the United States does - more than Australia does.

The bottom line for the world is that Asia is now one of the major engines of the global economy. The bottom line for Canada is that our fate as a prosperous society is now inextricably linked to that of the Asia-Pacific region.

That's economies.

Our ties to the Pacific go well beyond trade and investment. Over half of our immigrants now come from Asia. Canada has taken over 100,000 refugees from Indochina. The last war in which large numbers of Canadians lost their lives was not in Europe but in Korea. Much of our peacekeeping experience was acquired in Asia. A major portion of the drugs on our streets comes from fields and factories in Asia. And the pollution which rings the globe and knows no borders is in part of Asian origin.

The problems of the Pacific are not Pacific problems; they are Canadian. Prosperity in the Pacific is prosperity for Canada. And security in the Pacific is Canadian security.

For much of our history, Canada was an Atlantic nation. Most of our trade and immigration crossed that Ocean, and our basic values are European values. But in our consciousness, we have always been a nation of three great oceans - the Atlantic, the Arctic, which makes us a neighbour and a unique partner of the Soviet Union; and the Pacific, whose importance to Canada grows every day.