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ulticulturalism Means Business

Canadians are familiar with such names as Reichman, Polanyi, Vander Zalm, Cowpland and Sung. They conjure up images of purchases of New York skyscrapers, and of Nobel Prize winners, provincial politics, state-of-the-art industry technology, and high-fashion design. The names belong to high-profile Canadians who came to Canada as immigrants.

Who are these Canadians? They are people who have come from throughout the world, sought economic opportunities, and who have helped shape the face of this nation.

Canadians have watched Alfred Sung reach international stardom as a high-fashion designer. They may not know or care that his first home was Hong Kong but they are proud of him as a Canadian. And who helped propel him to stardom? Two

other immigrants, Saul and Joe Mimran who came from Morocco only 30 years ago. The Monaco Group, which markets Sung designs, had total sales in and outside Canada of \$24 million at the end of 1985.

Small business also attracts newcomers to Canada. In Toronto, Canada's largest city, almost 60 per cent of self-employed people have a non-British or non-French background, although ethnic groups account for only 45 per cent of the city's population. In the country as a whole, these same Canadians are 50 per cent more likely to be self-employed than other Canadians, despite the fact they constitute 31 per cent of the population.

The Canadian government recognizes that entrepreneurs from different ethnic backgrounds mean business for Canada. For that reason, the government has not only increased the general immi-

gration level but has doubled the number of Canadian business immigrants in the past two years.

Business immigrants bring contacts with businesses in their former homeland. They also bring language and cultural understanding which in our ever-shrinking world help Canada trade with other nations. As Prime Minister Mulroney says, "Few countries depend on foreign trade as much as we do. And fewer countries are better placed to battle for new international markets."

In recent years, several Pacific Rim countries have entered world markets as major importers and exporters of manufactured goods. As a result, a number of western nations have attempted to strengthen their cultural and economic links with the Asian continent.

Canada recognizes that Japan, China, India, South Korea, Taiwan, Hong Kong

and Singapore represent major trading opportunities in the present and even larger markets in the future. Successful trading agreements will depend on sensitive negotiations between people who understand one another.

Aware of the impact of multiculturalism, the Canadian Chamber of Commerce has become a multilingual organization. It is therefore able to interact with other organizations such as the Canada-Arab Business Council, the Canadian East European Trade Council, the Canada-Korea Business Council and the Canadian Committee of the Pacific Basin Economic Council. The list is growing.

In April 1986, the Minister of State for Multiculturalism hosted a conference called Multiculturalism Means Business with the intention of making Canadians aware of the resource represented by a multiracial, multicultural business community. John Bulloch, President of the Canadian Federation of Independent Business, urged those at the conference to capitalize on this opportunity. He said, "Resources within Canadian communities that are of neither English nor French origin represent a national treasure. We need them to help Canada become a genuinely international economy."

In a multicultural business world, successful trading agreements depend upon sensitive negotiations between people who understand one another.

