

Canadexpo: Largest Ever National Display in Hong Kong

By John Treleaven

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Commissioner for Canada, Maurice D. Copithorne, in a press conference at the Furama Hotel, February 9, announced details of Canadexpo '84, a Canadian sponsored solo trade show to be held in Hong Kong May 16-20.

Mr. Copithorne said "With seven provinces and 77 companies already confirmed for the Show, Canadexpo '84 will be the largest national trade show ever held in Hong Kong."

Canadexpo '84 is sponsored by the Canadian Department of External Affairs and features participation by Canadian companies from the following industry sectors: telecommunications, computer hardware and software, oil and gas equipment, food products, packaging machinery and consumer goods.

The Show will attract buyers from Hong Kong, the People's Republic of China and neighbouring countries in South East Asia. Canadian business interests in the Pacific Rim have expanded rapidly in recent years with Canada becoming both a significant market for exporter to and investor in the Region.

Canadexpo '84 is another of series of Government's initiatives aimed at increasing the presence of the Canadian exporters in the market of the Pacific Rim. Total trade between Canada and the nations of the Pacific Rim exceeded HK\$100 billion in 1983. In that same year, two way trade between Canada and Hong Kong exceeded HK\$5.5 billion.

Canadian companies are very active in Hong Kong's marketplace. Some 50 Canadian firms have branches and subsidiaries here, most of them dealing not only in Hong Kong but throughout South Asia and into People's Republic of China. Approximately 250 Canadian companies

are active in Hong Kong's market through agents and distributors. In 1983, 20 sales and marketing missions came to Hong Kong seeking 700 business visitors called on our Trade Commissioner for assistance in one form or another. We bring to Canadexpo '84 experienced Canadian exporters seeking to increase their share of one of the most dynamic markets in the world.

Total trade with China in 1983 exceeded HK\$4 billion. The recent visit to Canada by Premier Zhao Zi Yang has resulted in a number of initiatives by both Governments to strengthen existing economic and commercial ties. Contract for satellite earth stations which will involve co-production in China and a foreign investment insurance agreement were signed during the visit.

Canada is a major supplier to the People's Republic of China of geographical, mining equipment and aircraft among other products. The sectors to be highlighted in Canadexpo '84 have been chosen with the China market in mind.

High-tech Products

About 15 to 20 of the companies taking part will be exhibiting high-tech products ranging from sophisticated microwave communications systems and computer software to the black boxes used for data switching.

Pre-registration and publicity mailing lists are being run on I.P. Sharp's time sharing service in Toronto through a micro-computer in the Canadian Commission. During the show this data base will be used to issue visitor badges and to allow quick matching of exhibitor and visitor information for later follow up.

Equipment being exhibited will mostly be "live" with voice and data communications being switched back to Canada. Mitel will provide an EPABX to give a telephone service in the exhibition hall while Novatel will display its cellular mobile radio telephone.

Telidon, Canada's pioneering videotex system will also be present, proving information about the exhibitors. It will also be possible to access Canadian data bases such as the Toronto Stock Exchange to get real-time stock quotations.

Computers will be represented by Bytec-Comterm, manufacturer of the popular IBM compatible portable, Hyperion. Computer monitors and a unique projection system which permits large displays of computer data and graphics will be displayed by Electrohome.

The show promises to be an exciting look into the future of electronics and communications. This is only a part of it, however, and Canadian capabilities in a variety of other fields will also be highlighted.

Information booths will be set up by the provinces. These will highlight the capabilities of companies that are not

participating in the show as well as economic conditions, tourism and investment opportunities.

Visiting Neighbours

It is expected that the show will attract visitors from China and neighbouring Southeast Asian countries and Canadian Trade Commissioners from all of the embassies in the region will attend the show. They will also spend two days in meetings with officials from the department of external affairs to discuss regional trade matters.

Canadexpo '84, which is the biggest promotion Canada has ever undertaken in Hong Kong, is being supported by the Canadian Export Association, the Canadian Manufacturers Association, the Canadian University Association of Hong Kong and, of course, the Canadian Business Association of Hong Kong. It is also being endorsed by the Hong Kong Trade Development Council, the Hong Kong General Chamber of Commerce, the Chinese General Chamber of Commerce, the Chinese Manufacturers Association and the Federation of Hong Kong Industries.

Hand in hand with the show will be various cultural promotions.

On May 1, a month-long show of Canadian Art entitled "Unconventional Photographic Images, will take place at the Alvin Gallery. On May 14, the Furama hotel will launch a two-week long promotion of Canadian food products in La Ronda Restaurant.

The Tsimshatsui branch of Shui Hing department store, in co-operation with the Canadian Club of Hong Kong, will sponsor a show of Canadian women's fashions and household products on May 15. From May 29 to 31, Les Grands Ballets Canadiens will be performing at the Hong Kong City Hall.

Announcing Canadexpo '84 while visiting Hong Kong last May, the Minister of State for International Trade, the Honourable Gerald Regan said "Canada has a serious and long term interests in South East Asia and Hong Kong is key to our efforts in this area. Trade and investment between us is growing impressively even through difficult times but there is much more room for growth. Our joint efforts in this area are facilitated by the great "people links" which exist between us. I assure you that we intend to pursue vigorously trade and investment opportunities here and I would encourage you to do likewise in Canada." ■

John Treleaven is the Senior Trade Commissioner at the Commission for Canada.