

Ten leading-edge Canadian alternate fuels technology companies showcased their products at the *Natural Gas Vehicle Show* held in Yokohama, Japan, October 17-19, 2000.

"Natural Gas Vehicle 2000, Transportation for the New Century" was the



Canada in the driver's seat

Natural Gas Vehicle Show in Japan

theme of this internationally renowned industry event which drew 2,000 visitors and participants from Japan, Korea, Europe, and the United States to view the 86 exhibits and 49 natural gas vehicles (NGV) on display. An array of presentations and seminars mapped out the future of an auto industry confronted with a looming energy crisis.

Alternative fuels, such as natural gas and or hydrogen are widely seen to be the future of automotive transport. They are much cleaner and generally less expensive than is conventional gasoline. Unfortunately, these technologies also require a new infrastructure for delivering the fuel as well as, in the case of hydrogen, a new design for the car.

Natural gas vehicles are seen by the industry to be a potential "bridging" technology between today's internal combustion, gasoline burning cars and the clean "hydrogen" car of the future, which will be powered by fuel cells such as those manufactured by Canada's **Ballard Power Systems Inc.**

Natural gas is relatively similar (in terms of chemistry) to traditional

gasolines so it can be used in a modified internal combustion engine. This means that auto manufacturers can create these vehicles without having to radically alter traditional engine designs, which in turn lowers costs for both the manufacturer and the consumer. What does need to be changed now ever is the storage system in the car and the infrastructure surrounding the delivery of the fuel.

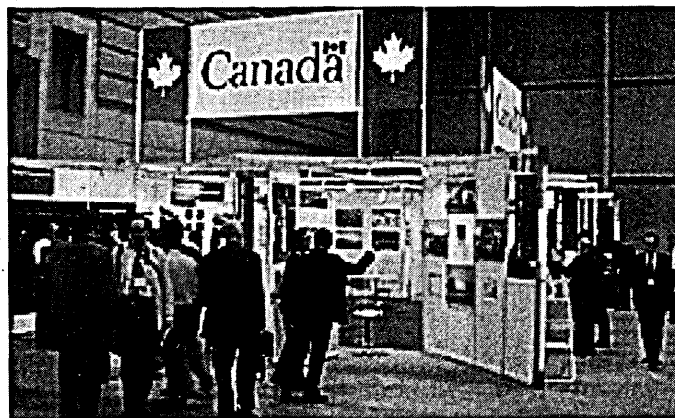
That is where Canadian companies come in. Alberta-based **Dynetek**, for example, makes the **DyneCell**, an industry leader in natural gas storage systems widely used in Japan and around the world. Ontario-based **Fuelmaker** produces

patented in a Canadian stand. It was co-sponsored by the Canadian Embassy in Japan, Natural Resources Canada (CANMET), and the Canadian NGV Alliance, and featured a large common area used for meetings which was framed by the various company booths. This distinctive approach allowed participants to maximize the size and efficiency of the space provided to them, while at the same time minimizing the cost. In addition, companies were able to cover for one another, which meant a better use of resources all around.

With its distinctive Canadian colour scheme, the stand proved to be a major draw at the show, as was confirmed by the fact that it won second prize for overall design! This distinctly "Canadian," co-operative approach worked well and was especially appreciated by Japanese visitors.

The market in Japan for such new technological approaches is strong, and the Canadian initiative will be repeated next year.

For more information, or to participate in next year's Natural Gas Vehicle Show, contact Eric



Nick White of Charonic Canada

Canada's stand at the Natural Gas Vehicle Show in Yokohama, Japan.

refuelling appliances for natural gas vehicles. And B.C.-based **PowerTech** tests and certifies NGV systems worldwide.

Nine of the Canadian companies who came to the NGV show, including those mentioned above, partici-

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