

the Canadians? Why aren't you more active? Why don't you make a bigger splash?" Of course, Canada has, in fact, been making waves here for a long time. From the early days of the Colombo Plan, to the creation of CIDA [the Canadian International Development Agency] in 1968 and till recently, Canadian Development Assistance has been the flagship of a Canadian presence in Malaysia.

Since 1958, Canada has contributed, through its various channels, slightly more than C\$100 million in official development assistance. In 1990, both governments agreed to change the relationship from one of donor-recipient to one of partnership, where Canadian assistance will be more flexible and will facilitate closer relationships between Malaysians and Canadians.

Now it seems to me that we have crossed an important threshold. Readers of Canada's *Financial Post* may have noticed it in the tone of last month's feature on Malaysia, with headlines like: "Malaysia now one of our key trading partners."

Recognition of this is helping to generate a steady stream of high-level visitors in both directions. My visit was preceded by those of Transport Minister Doug Young and Ontario Premier Bob Rae. Over the last two months Canada has hosted visits by the Chief Ministers of Perak and Sarawak, and will soon have the honour of receiving Datin Seri Dr. Siti Hasmah along with a large Malaysian delegation to the Commonwealth Games in Victoria. Far from being "the quiet Canadians," we are even beginning to get questions about why we have been attracting so much attention lately.

I think that there are a number of reasons for Canada's growing profile in Malaysia. The first is that we are working hard to get that attention, to convince Malaysians that we are committed to the relationship, and that we can bring value to it.

Hence, the high-level visits, the trade missions and co-operative programs that we mount — and will continue to mount.

Don't be surprised if you hear those visitors repeating the same refrain. We have been thinking hard about our relationship and have identified four main priorities for Canada in Malaysia. These include:

- maximizing Canadian participation in upcoming infrastructure projects;
- expanding our co-operation in the environmental sector, both in terms of government-to-government links and new business opportunities;