

said that “the abolition of the death penalty in Canada has not led to increased homicide rates. Canadian statistics indicate that the number of homicides in 2001 were generally three times lower than the homicides in 1975, the year before the death penalty was abolished in Canada.” He then added that “homicide rates in Canada are generally three times lower than the homicide rates in the United States, which uses the death penalty. He also cited statistics from the US Bureau of Justice, which showed that the homicide rate in the US in 1999 was 5.7 for every 100,000 people of the population and the rate in Canada was only 1.8.”

Canada was harshly criticized and accused of adopting hypocritical positions within the WTO and the Commonwealth. On one hand, Canada claimed to make efforts “to avert the widening of the rift between developed and developing countries” and on the other hand “maintaining its attempts to hold moral high ground as a champion of developing world issues within both WTO and the Commonwealth.” Some editorials questioned the “rationale” of the presence of non-Asian countries like “the US, Canada and South American countries in APEC.”

Some Canadian companies made headlines in the Philippine press, including Nortel Networks (when its sales jumped in the Philippines), Crimson Logic (when it announced its prospective expansion from Hong Kong into the Philippines), and WSI Internet which specializes in developing web-sites.

Canada was also described as the preferred destination for Filipino women who have worked in Hong Kong for many years and “find it very difficult to adjust to the lifestyle in the Philippines when they go home for good. Because they see no future for them at home, many opt to go to Canada even if they could hardly ever save or send money back to their families. They see Canada as an open door for immigration, which unfortunately is not always true.” One of the local papers lamented the brain-drain that the Philippines is facing and the continuous immigration of many Filipino women “moving overseas to work as nannies and caregivers while in the process of upgrading their skills and trying to pass the board exams in US or Canada. Despite difficulties of moving overseas, they leave nevertheless because even a nanny in Canada makes five times more in income than as a nurse in the Philippines.”

The performances of the Canadian duo, sopranos Grace Chan and Joanna Go, with Filipino pianist Jonathan Coe, were well covered by local papers. There were also articles on the visit of prominent Philippine church leaders to Canada during the Christmas season for fund-raising.

In a long article entitled “A great Canadian adventure”, the editorialist Frank Arce expressed his fascination with Canada’s tourist attractions and the magic of its major cities, including the changing of seasons in Canada, the CN Tower, the Royal Museum and its archaeological artifacts, the Art Gallery of Ontario and the Bata Shoe Museum (which displays a pair of Imelda Marcos’s shoes). He went on to say: “Most people would advise against visiting Canada once the fall/winter season rolls in. In fact, Canadians try and get away from it themselves. They say the cold can be biting, even extremely painful, to those who come from the tropics. Well, despite protestations for me to postpone my trip until the summer, I forged on. For how else would one gain the complete experience if one were not to go through the uniqueness, pleasant or unpleasant, of a strange land?”