

That's over \$6 million per officer. They handled 130,000 inquiries from Canadian exporters seeking trade opportunities and 124,000 inquiries from foreign importers interested in products from Canada.

I don't think that's a bad investment, particularly for a country dependent on trade for more than 30 per cent of its GNP, 3 million jobs and \$5,000 for every man, woman and child in this country. That investment will be more crucial in the future, as trade becomes more competitive and as new regions and economies develop.

Look at the dependence of Canadian industrial sectors on exports. For the fishery industry, its about 80 per cent, for softwood lumber 70 per cent, for aerospace about 73 per cent, for computers over 90 per cent, for pulp 80 per cent and for petrochemicals 40 per cent. And look at the growth of that dependence in other sectors. For mining equipment in 1973, exports were 26 per cent of business. That became 73 per cent by the second half of the 1980s. In the communications equipment sector, exports went from 16 per cent to 37 per cent and in the construction machinery sector, from 32 per cent to 52 per cent in the same period.

That increase in the importance of exports for growth and an increasingly competitive market have made Canadian companies spend more and more of their time on international matters. We are told that on average, medium to large-size businesses in Canada now spend up to 75 per cent of their time on foreign questions. That can be for market development. It can be for business expansion. It can be concern over instability whether in the Gulf or South Africa or Central America. And it can be a preoccupation with other international problems whether they be debt or the environment or trade talks.

Governments can't start to look inwards when Canadian companies are looking outwards. Companies know what will make them profitable or poor. Countries need to know that too. And there are partnerships to be pursued, partnerships in new regions and partnerships to face new problems.

I can make that point for many corners of this globe. But let me focus for a moment on Asia, an area of increasing importance for Alberta and Canada, a region which will be as important to the world of the next century as Europe was to the world of the last century. Look at the facts: