

# 新商刊 THE Bulletin

A Hong Kong General Chamber of Commerce Magazine 香港總商會月刊

## France— Diversity within Unity 多姿多采的法國



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## **France and Hong Kong —Trade Routes need Fair Winds**



When I first joined the Hong Kong Government in 1954 as a very inexperienced executive officer, the then Commerce and Industry Department was becoming concerned at the rather illiberal attitudes of the French Government towards imports from certain countries, including Hong Kong. Soon afterwards, the French authorities notified the British Government of quantitative restrictions which had been placed on a wide range of Hong Kong products and the introduction of very strict certification criteria for all imports from the Colony. Despite every endeavour by the Hong Kong Government and efforts on our behalf by the British Government, the restrictions stayed put and at a time when our exports of locally made products to other European countries were rising rapidly, our export performance to the French market was relatively poor.

The Hong Kong authorities regularly protested at the evident discrimination against our trade and pointed to the fact that French imports into Hong Kong were totally unrestricted, that the obligations of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade required France to accord Hong Kong similar unrestricted access (except under specific and special procedures which had not been applied) and that French business men were doing quite well with public works contracts here. There were other good arguments advanced for some change in French commercial policy towards Hong Kong.

To be fair, France in those early years had very considerable economic problems and historically tended to be protective of domestic industries. But when the French economy improved substantially, what Hong Kong saw as unreasonable restrictions on trade remained.

The turning point came in the late 1960's with determined efforts by Hong Kong trade and in particular the Trade Development Council, to remove French fears of saturation of her market by a flood of Hong Kong products. Contacts at all levels of officialdom

and the respective private sectors were established and maintained. In France, importers and others pressed their interests with vigour and gradually a greater understanding of the situation of Hong Kong was perceived in official French quarters.

Meanwhile Hong Kong had resisted the temptation to meet restriction with restriction and to bend the liberal regime towards all imports from any source by placing selective import restraints on French goods. Brandy would have offered a prime target. The Hong Kong Government refused to countenance such measures and this policy eventually paid dividends as French attitudes changed. The TDC and French Consular and Trade officials energetically worked in favour of a cooperative policy of understanding, goodwill and exchange visits.

This issue of *the Bulletin* will demonstrate how well these efforts have succeeded. French goods and services can be found everywhere in Hong Kong. French companies abound (many are Chamber members and I hope more will be!). French trade marks seen in our shops are synonymous with high quality, superb design and a style all their own. French contractors continue to win large constructional deals and French brandy maintains its lead in a market that historically appreciates this particular beverage.

Hong Kong goods are now reaching the French market in increasing quantities. The previous import restrictions have been largely dismantled although a few remain. Hong Kong and French trade missions regularly visit each other's home ground, very senior officials do likewise and overall there is a considerable atmosphere of friendship and goodwill. *Long may it continue!*



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*'Truly, China must be the France of Asia,  
or perhaps it is France that is the China of Europe?'*

The statement was meant to be a relatively light hearted comment intended as a tribute to the cuisine of one of Hong Kong's better restaurants. The speaker was the leader of a visiting French mission who called on the Chamber several yeas ago. Yet his statement is perhaps more than a pleasantry, since the resemblance between China and France goes deeper than a mutual interest in things gastronomic. Very obviously, the differences between China and France are far greater than any points of resemblance. But if the differences may be taken for granted, then it is not difficult to discern several striking parallels, particularly when one links the role of both peoples to their relative contribution to their respective continents — what China is to Asia, so France may be said to be to Europe.

Geographically, both countries stand at the opposite extremes of the Euro-Asian land mass, China looking east, France looking west. And as each looks out respectively to east or west, both can gaze upon the neighbouring spectacle of a somewhat eccentric group of islanders — the Japanese and British — who are neither part of the mainland tradition nor wholly alien from it.

Both countries owe much to an agricultural-based economy. True, both have flourishing manufacturing industries, manufacturing in fact contributes about 40% of French GNP, against less than 10% from agriculture.

But the dominant cultural tone derives from a history in which the peasant has traditionally been the basic source of real wealth. Both are large countries — relative to the size of their respective continents — stretching from the cold north to the more relaxed south, and both accommodate the variety of human temperament one finds along with that geographic distinction. And both can be said to have a geographic unity that is lacking in case of such varied countries as Germany, Korea and Vietnam — all of which are (or in the case of Vietnam until recently were) divided nations, although with basically the same people. It is indeed somewhat unusual in the history of human development to find political and geographic

borders that coincide so neatly with racial borders as has happened in the cases of France and China.

China and France have both built up distinctive cultures that have helped shape the continents of which they are a part. Just as the unifying bond between Chinese everywhere is the Chinese language, so the French in their worldwide travels have promoted their language as the distinctive badge of French civilisation. Countless Alliances Francaises have spread across the globe, and only recently has French lost its pre-eminence as the language of diplomacy.

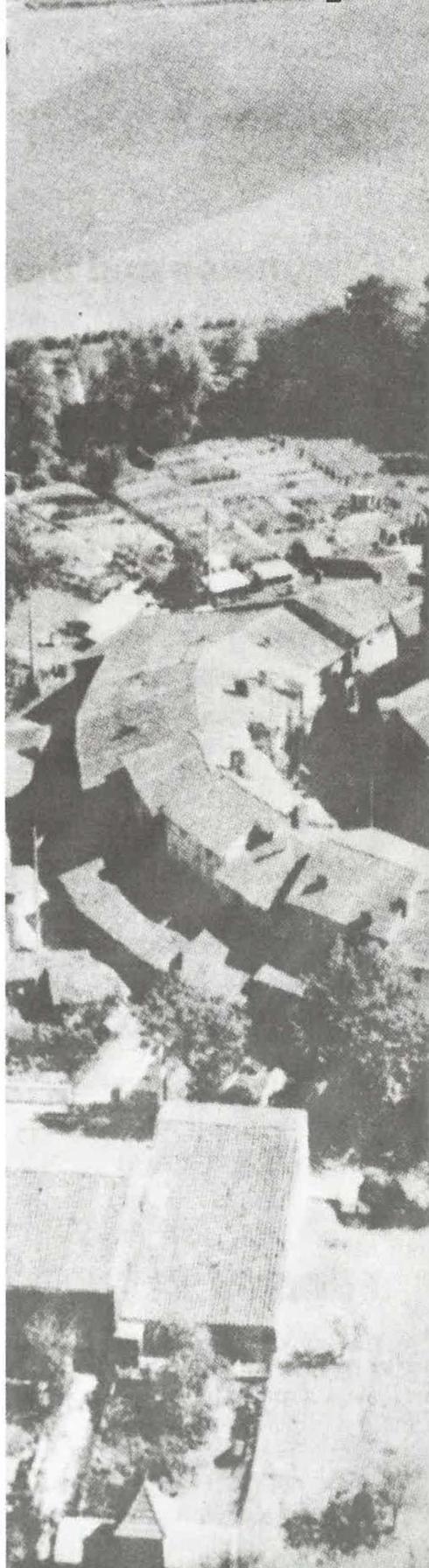
Both have a great artistic tradition. Both were distinguished by a splendid central monarchy that brought unity to the country at an early stage in its development, until both underwent revolution and installed an alternative form of Government. Both have capital cities around which legends have formed.

The parallels are endless. One might go on to mention that both traditionally place great emphasis on the family, and that both nations have tended to look inwards towards themselves, and look upon all foreigners as barbarians. But perhaps the most basic resemblance is that both countries have ancient and dignified civilisations that were formed at an early stage of their national development and have persisted throughout all change.

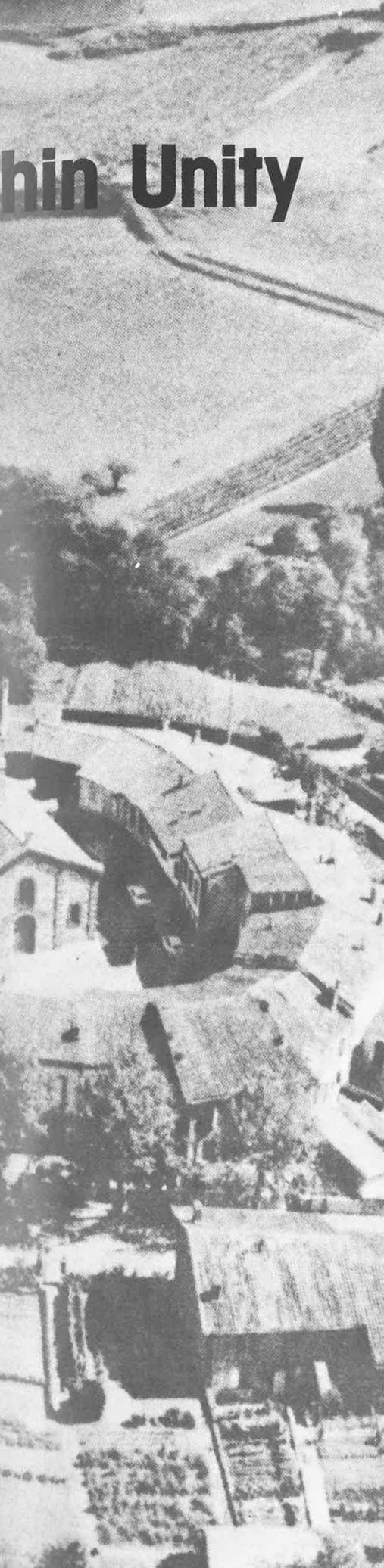
Throughout western history, many individuals have looked upon France as a sort of second homeland. 'When he dies, every good American goes to Paris' said British wit and playwright Oscar Wilde. This is partly because France became a unified and distinct nation far earlier than many of its European neighbours such as Germany or Italy. And here its history again resembles that of China. The Chinese nation spread out from the Yellow River, gradually taking in a larger and larger share of surrounding territory until the natural boundaries were reached. This was achieved partly through natural expansion, partly through conquest, partly through dynastic alliance, partly through changes in dynasty. France went through a similar process of consolidation.

Prior to the expansion of the

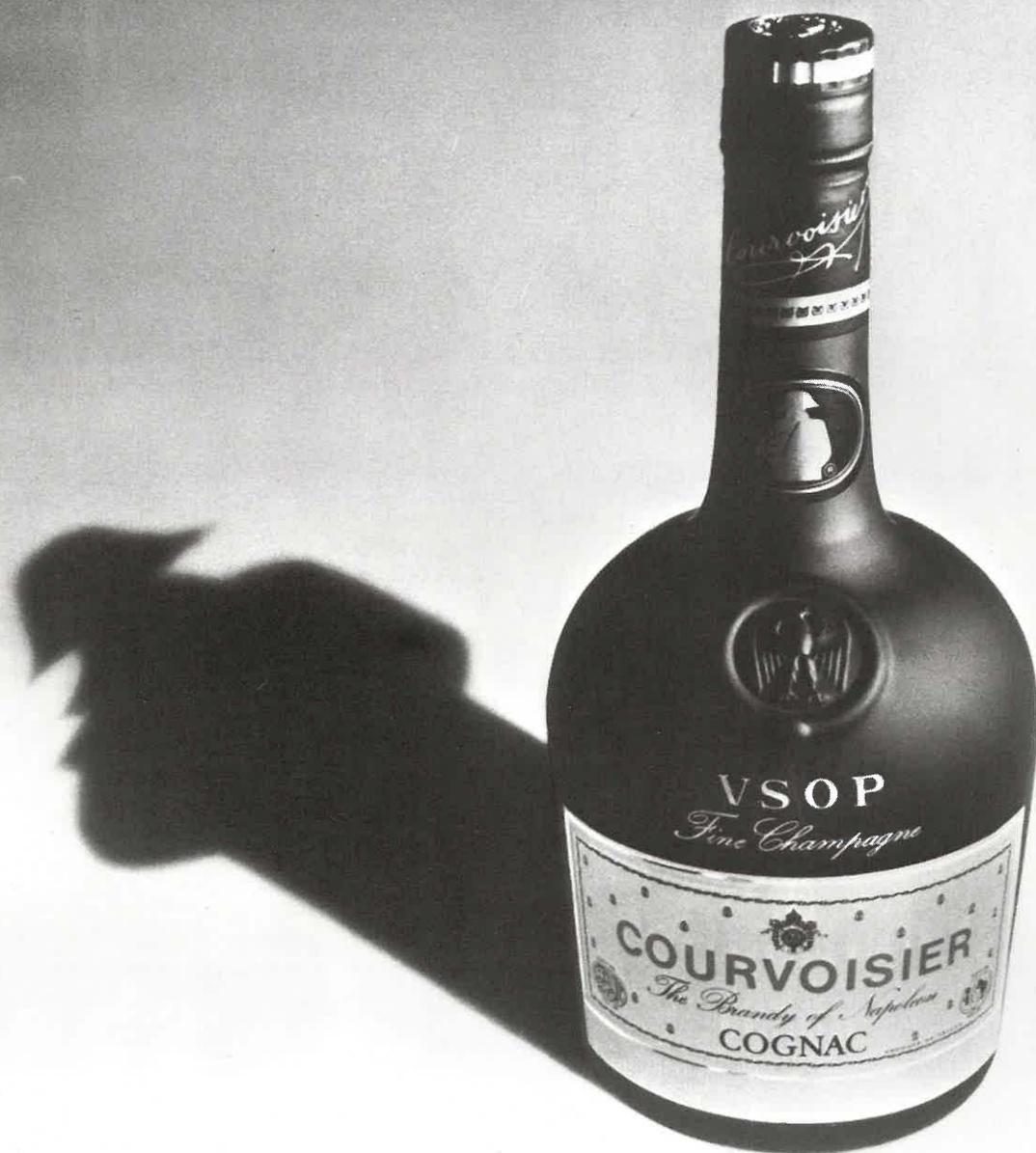
# France — Diversity



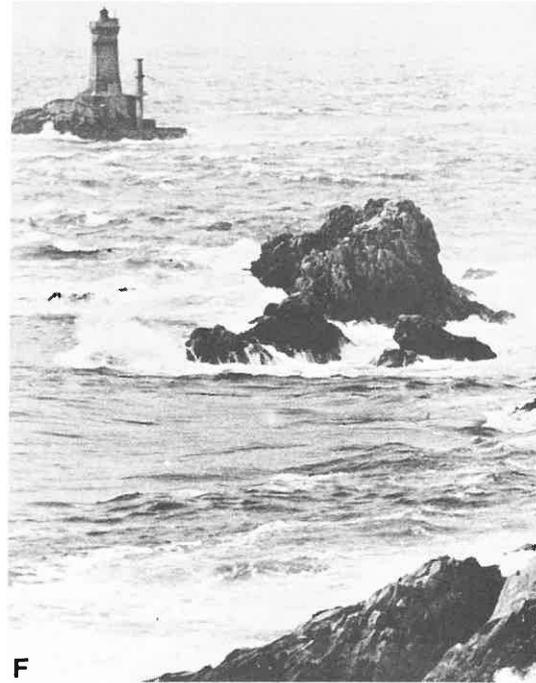
# hin Unity



- (A) A tiny French village in St. Martin d'Oyde
- (B) The Seine valley, near the twin village of Les Andelys
- (C) The Alps, Izoard Pass a natural frontier between France and Italy
- (D) A country cafe, meeting place of the local community.
- (E) Traditional dress in Brittany



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F

Roman empire in the first century B. C. little is known of the history of France, or Gaul as it was then known ( which is why French cigarettes are named 'Gaulloise' and the French are said to have a 'Gallic' temperament . . .). For several centuries France was a province of the Roman empire, and the heritage of Roman custom and law has remained until the present day, particularly in Provence, in the south east of France.

It is not only the Gauls who are the ancestors of the modern French, but also the Franks, a people from beyond the eastern borders of present day France who settled in northern France when the Roman empire was crumbling in the fifth century.

For a time, it looked as though France might become the logical successor to the Roman Empire when Charlemagne was declared Holy Roman Emperor on Christmas Day 800 AD. However, Charlemagne's territory encompassed much of Germany and Italy as well as France, and this 'unnatural' grouping fell apart once the personal magnetism and military strength of Charlemagne was no more.

By the tenth century France was a patchwork of feudal states, perhaps somewhat similar to China between the Han and T'ang dynasties. The only common political link was an elected king. It took 500 years to turn these feudal states into one nation – 350 years under the Capet kings (987 to 1382) and a further 150 years under

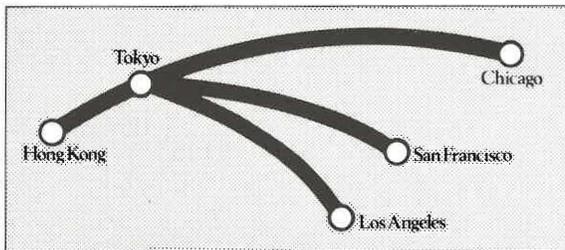


(F) The coastline of Brittany  
(G) A typical seaport at Lorient in Southern Brittany

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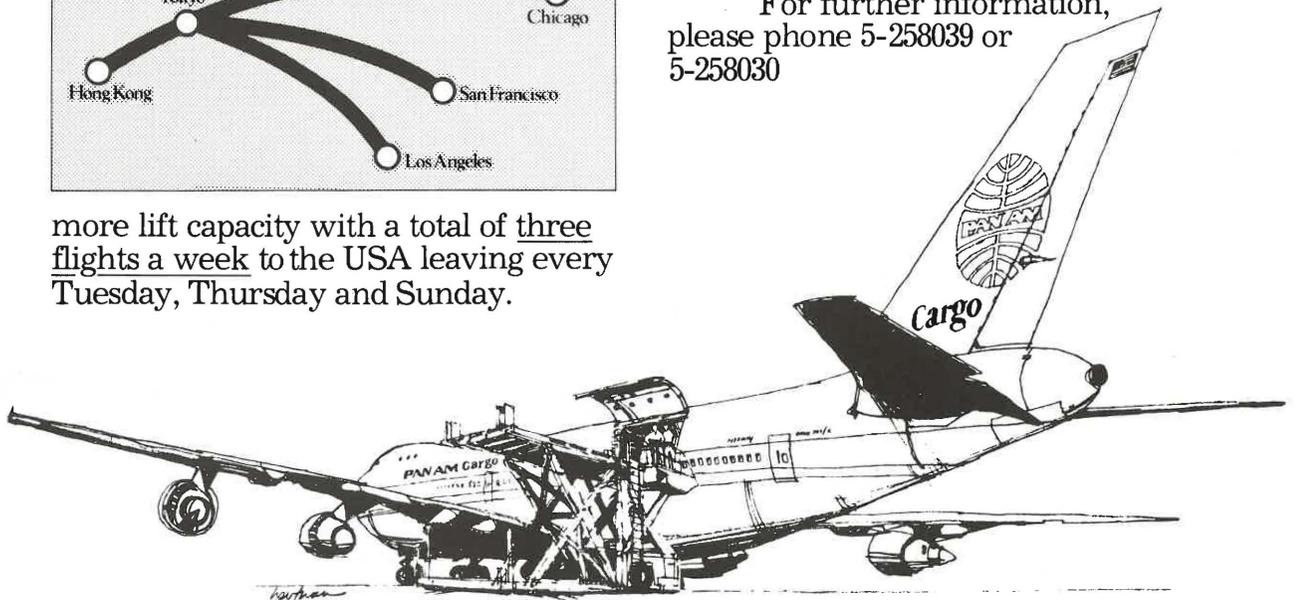


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Cattle market in a small French village



Typical Normandy farmland. Normandy is famous for its dairy cattle, butter and cheese.



the Valois dynasty (1382 –1483). The Capets made the crown hereditary and Paris the capital city. In their wars with the English, whose king owned vast parts of western France ( he was theoretically a vassal of the French king, but rarely chose to acknowledge the fact!) they created a sense of national identity and laid the beginnings of the French army. By the fourteenth century only four large provinces remained independent – Brittany, Flanders, Burgundy and Guyenne. But in 1491, Brittany became part of France as the result of a dynastic alliance, and the map of France took on a look very close to its present day shape, although the eastern frontier continued to cause political problems right up to 1918.

But within this unity, provincial diversity has been retained. Indeed, one of the strengths of the French character, as in the Chinese, is the strength of the regions. Few educated Europeans could list the regions of Spain, Italy or Germany ( unless they happened to be Spanish, Italian or German!) but many can recite the romantic name call of French regions – Normandy, Brittany, Aquitaine, the Loire, Alsace, Burgundy, Provence, Languedoc, Gasconny. Each conjures up a distinct image, even to one who has not travelled widely in France.

Normandy is gentle, undulating pasture land and forest, with magnificent Gothic churches, and celebrated for its cheese, cream and cider.



Brittany is celtic, slightly foreign to many Frenchmen, a mysterious, somewhat primitive peninsula, the original America (not to be confused with America!).

Burgundy is wine, vineyards and a celebrated cuisine. The *Larousse Gastronomique* (Encyclopedia of Gastronomy) categorically – if a trifle unfairly – states: ‘Burgundy is undoubtedly the region of France where the best food and the best wines are to be had.’

Provence is the Mediterranean and sun; old Roman viaducts and arena; and the Cote d’Azur or Riviera, still the mecca of jet setters the world over.

The images are cliched, but have their foundation in reality. Camembert does taste better in Normandy, its region of origin, a bottle of Pouilly



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the beach at Arcachon.



the promenade at Nice.



A typical scene on the Champs Elysées one of the most famous shopping centre of the world.

Fume drunk overlooking the Loire is better than one taken from the supermarket shelf; a sun tan acquired at St. Tropez feels and looks better than one picked up at almost any other resort.

France has been formed, then, by the strength of its regional life, a life centred on the farm or vineyard, the village, the Chateau — and the church. Whether Roman Catholic, as are the vast majority, Protestant or simply anti-clerical, the French have always taken religion seriously. When the Papacy moved from Rome in the 14th century, it is not surprising that Avignon in Provence should have been chosen as the temporary home. At the other extreme, no atheist can revile the priesthood as vehemently as a French atheist. The same depth of feeling pervades politics — no statesman has been imbued with the mystique of patriotism as deeply as Charles de Gaulle. Equally, few communist parties in Western Europe have been as successful and well organised as the French communist party.

If the regions are, as it were, the body of French life, its mind is Paris. Apart possibly from Rome, few Europeans capitals, few cities anywhere, have developed so distinct an image. Like the British, the French have had the good sense to make their metropolis the seat of Government, which gives to Paris the feel of being a capital city, a city where events occur, where policies are made. And at the same time, it is a centre of learning, art, entertainment, and a city to be lived in.

In the Sorbonne, it has one of the oldest universities in Europe. Although its claim to be the world capital of painting has in recent decades been 'challenged by New York, its claim to be the fashion centre of the world has never been disputed. Traditionally, it is a city for young lovers and for glamorous mistresses — the invitation 'Come with me to Paris for the weekend' is a distinct invitation to romance, whereas 'Come with me to Stockholm for the weekend' is probably an invitation to a conference.

Perhaps its charm lies in the fact that it is a city that has been moulded on a human scale. Unlike Rome, which is visually overwhelming, or New York, which is just too big to cope with, man seems to fit naturally into the Parisian landscape. The Seine is still a river for walking by, in a sense

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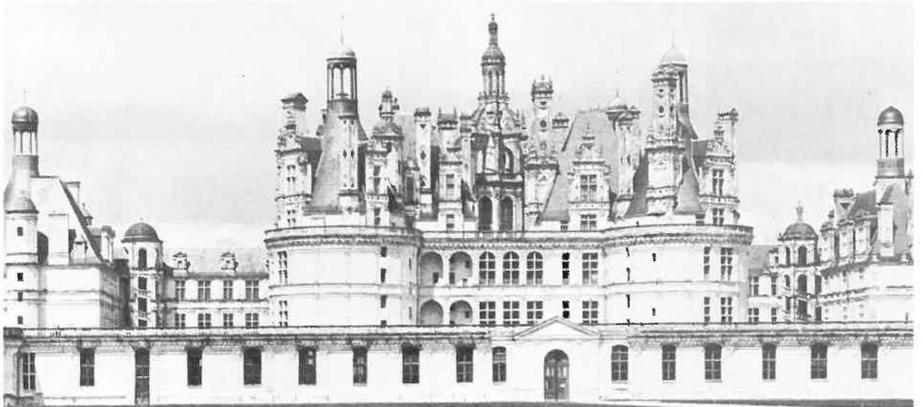
that the Thames or Hudson have never been. And of course the area of the grands boulevards was conceived as one of the first and most logical examples of town planning.

In the arts, the French have established high creativity in architecture, painting and literature. Only the English (not the British!) can challenge the French achievement in European literature. The contrast between the two languages is revealing — English is a language of allusion, of ambiguity, of understatement, of colloquialisms — a language for poets and dramatists, rather than novelists and philosophers. French is a language of precision, of definition, a language perhaps for controlling the environment, whereas English is for exploring the environment.

The contrasting attitude towards 'exporting' the two languages is also significant. The English have adopted a take-it-or-leave-it approach and have largely left other races to learn their language as best as they may. The French have adopted a more systematic attitude to tuition and during the height of French colonial reign in Africa and Asia, the sign of belonging to metropolitan France was a command of correct and largely patois (dialect) free French. Once the language is mastered, the other benefits of French culture will follow automatically, seems to have been the philosophy, and undoubtedly this has paid handsome dividends. As far as South East Asia is concerned the benefits of this are still apparent among the Vietnamese.

Along with the arts of peace — literature and painting, gastronomy and fashion, language and philosophy — the French have also nursed a passion for 'la gloire'. They have usually been one of the strongest nations in Europe in a military as well as a cultural sense, and this perhaps found its most celebrated expression during the conquest of vast areas of Europe achieved under Napoleon. For a time it seemed that France might indeed achieve the first European-wide unity since the Roman empire.

Although not thought of today as a particularly militaristic race, France traditionally concentrated on maintaining a splendid army. However, it was one particular unit, the Legion, that succeeded in monopolising most of the popular attention given to France's fighting forces. It is not surprising that many of the most



The 16th century Chateau de Chambord is more a palace than a fortified castle.

celebrated of French stories — The Three Musketeers and Cyrano de Bergerac, for instance — praise the skills of the professional swordsman.

But all this is part of the past, and whatever ambitions towards European unity France may today possess are expressed in terms of Common Market diplomacy rather than military aggression. France, like virtually every country in the world, is changing rapidly. The France of small market towns, of traditional villages, even Paris as seen through the eyes of popular singer Edith Piaf, belongs partly at least, to the brochures of tourist agents.

Much of present day Paris is fast food, high rise office blocks and even higher prices. The roadside restaurant offers not a regional speciality, but the 'menu touristique' — usually indifferent chicken, steak or veal. The exclusive Riviera had spread westward in an almost unbroken rash of real estate development that has little in common with the romantic dream of 'a villa in the south of France'. A nineteen-seventies French movie too often suggests expanse of flesh rather than elegance of sentiment.

But no nation can escape its heritage. And while the changes of the modern world have affected France as much as they have affected America, Sweden or Hong Kong, France has often reacted to these changes in a uniquely French way. To take one modern industry alone, undoubtedly the most elegant of the earlier generation of medium jet aircraft was the Caravelle. Whatever its economics, certainly the most imaginative development in commercial aviation to date is the Concorde. And the French aviation industry has been single handed in taking up the challenge of U.S. manufacturers in developing the wide bodied airbus.



An Aerial view of Vaux-le-Vicomte.

French names still dominate the fashion industry. Japanese perfume remains a newcomer in a field where France means the best. The French automobile industry last year sold more to Hong Kong than did the American. And in Hong Kong, the world 'cognac' is understood as readily as the word 'dollar'. After all, what is drunk with Chinese food? Certainly not German beer, Scotch whisky or Dutch gin.

The secret of French success is perhaps the concept of Quality. And here we revert to last month's Bulletin when we discussed quality of life. The French have succeeded in developing a unique life style in which quality counts. They have had the good fortune to live in a friendly environment in which serious natural disaster rarely strikes. They have developed that environment to give of its best. And they have agreed that man should be allowed to appreciate what is best in life without self-consciousness or guilt. If they wish to share the output of that style with us, why should we object?

HG

# 17th Century Missionaries and 20th Century Women

## The French Consul-General, M. Yves Rodrigues Speaks of The French in Hong Kong

*Could you please explain briefly the interest of France in the social and economic development of Asia/Pacific territories in general, and in Hong Kong in particular?*

France has been present in this part of the world since the 17th Century when explorers and missionaries first began coming to the East. During the period of decolonisation, we had to relinquish some of our responsibilities, mainly in Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia, and the old system of foreign presence in China also came to an end. France therefore has been less active in the Region since the war in Asia, when assets were repatriated to France or Africa. Although some old established French companies have remained, the French presence in Asia is largely a postwar one, with French people taking a new look at the Far East and other developing countries of the region.

One means of preserving our social, economic and cultural presence is our participation in the multi-lateral organisations, for example, the Committee of Co-operation in the South Pacific, the Committee of Economic and Social Development for Asia at the United Nations, and on a more regional basis, co-operation with the five Asean countries.

Bi-laterally our trade with Asia has risen from 1.5 per cent of our total world trade to some 4.57 per cent; and in the case of Hong Kong, to slightly more than one per cent of Hong Kong's total trade.

Perhaps I could point out France does not have a protectionist policy for developing countries as such. Our trade deficit, mainly due to energy imports, which endured for a long time, demonstrates that we are not protectionist.

In Hong Kong in particular, the French presence has been felt in the shaping of the community, with construction work such as that at Kai Tak Airport, the Plover Cove Dam

and the Aberdeen Tunnel. In education, the Alliance Francaise is one of the largest such organisation in the world, with some 5,000 students, many of whom are Chinese.

*Since Sir Yuet-keung Kan's mission to France in 1974, two way trade between the two territories has increased substantially. Can you see even more growth in the years to come?*

Obviously, we are working towards increased trade. Statistics show that such trade has developed as obstacles that had hitherto hampered growth were removed; most recently by the Minister of Foreign Trade who committed himself to the removal of any discrimination during his visit to Hong Kong in 1976. Since then trade with Hong Kong has been developing rapidly. This is helped by the improving image of Hong Kong in France and vice versa, through the media.

And what is happening in China has obviously built up in France a greater interest in the entire area. Hong Kong now not only serves as a stopover for businessmen in Asia, but has become a destination for doing business. With the opening of the Trade Development Council office in Paris in 1977, and with more French buying missions coming to Hong Kong, exporters here should expect a more favourable balance of trade in future.

*French products sell well here, and French companies have done well in shipping and construction. But there is little industrial investment. Is there any particular reason for this?*

We have not concentrated our investments in this area. Historically, France's interest has been on other countries of this area, for example, Indonesia and Korea partly because of Hong Kong's political status. We have therefore not played a part in your textile revolution, nor have we played an important role in the development of the plastics, toys and electronics industries. But there has been a degree of investment, mainly in the field of



public works.

At the same time, I constantly remind entrepreneurs in my country that short and medium term investment in Hong Kong is, to say the least, pretty safe. And with the new policies of the Chinese Government, I am optimistic about the future of Hong Kong. I hope that there will be greater French investment in the years to come, so as to contribute to the diversification of industries which is now being seriously considered by the Government.

*Could you give a brief profile of the French community in Hong Kong? Perhaps in terms of size and spread of interests and activities?*

The French community has grown in size steadily over the past two decades, from some 500 to over 1,500. The activities of French people here reflect those of Hong Kong generally, with a majority in business, banking,



*cial and cultural activities, what sort of image would France wish to project in Hong Kong?*

The classical image of France has focussed on the quality of our products, on gastronomy, or art and culture, which is, I think, an oversimplified image of our country. We therefore would like to project the image that France is a modern nation, equally advanced in agriculture and industry, research, technology and science. This can be assessed by the number of Nobel Prizes France has won over the years, and the recent discoveries by which France has contributed to world development. We make efforts to improve the knowledge of what we can offer in the field of equipment, public works and technical knowhow.

*France was a founder member of the EEC. Do you believe a similar union of states would bring benefits to South East Asia?*

France has already expressed its support for the construction of a community of states in South East Asia. Of course the European experience is only partly relevant to the Asean venture, but the two experiences, although different, indicate the same kind of solidarity and mutual interest among member nations.

*How does France view the new relationship between China and the U.S.A.?*

I do not want to elaborate too much on the issue, but this is obviously a contribution to world peace. My country attaches great importance to the detente which is very significant in the European agreement for Co-operation and Security, and the President of the French Republic has recently pointed out that there will be no real detente if it is not of a global nature. Nevertheless, France was the first country to recognise the reality and existence, so to speak, of such a large nation in 1964, while the

Americans were still having mixed feelings about China. Therefore, we have established many contacts in China, and we can see many areas of possible cooperation in future. On the whole, France is one of the many countries which are ready to assist China with its modernisation programme. Of course, what China needs is not only imports of technology, but also knowledge of research and management, all of which need to be improved before any real modernisation can take place.

Therefore, co-operation in scientific, educational, cultural and technical areas is required in order to solve the basic problems. However we do not expect to sell a considerable volume of consumer products to China, because there is a limit to what China can absorb in terms of consumer goods.

*What would you regard as France's most significant contribution to civilisation?*

We have contributed in the advocacy of human rights and democracy — perhaps ever since the era of the French Revolution. The Civil Code drawn up by Napoleon, which was very advanced at the time it was written, is another contribution. Many countries have followed the guidelines set in the code in drawing up their own legislation. In science, we have contributed in medicine and nuclear research. And when a piece of French music is played, or when a French painting is appreciated — well, these things almost do not belong any more to my country, they belong to the world.

*In a slightly lighter vein — French women throughout the centuries have enjoyed a reputation for charm, chic and glamour. Is this reputation justified?*

I should perhaps put the question to you! Of course French women have these qualities, but this does not mean that women should be feminine just because men want them to be. France has recently achieved full equality between men and women, but this does not mean that they are identical. A woman can be equal to a man and yet preserve all her charm, chic and glamour. This in fact is a great mistake many women's liberation movement leaders have made. Women and men have not by nature been created identical. They are complementary to one another.

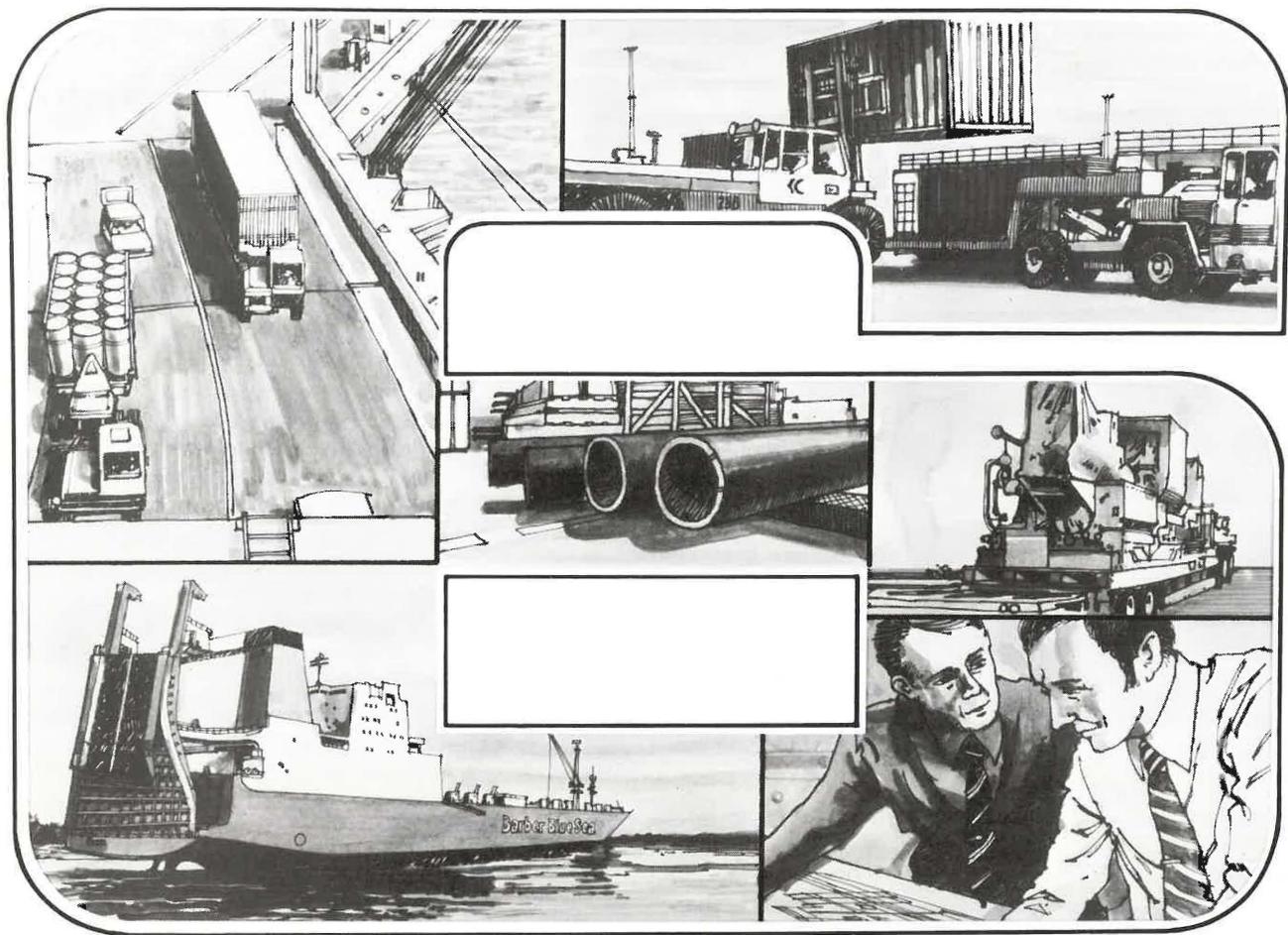


trade and industry. There are also teachers, students, and of course the consulate officials.

It is a widely diversified community well integrated into Hong Kong, with very few problems. The French mix very well with the community, and are always glad to meet French tourists, who average about 40,000 a year. The Union of French Abroad is one means of uniting the French community here, and it gives specific assistance when necessary — for example, in looking for accommodation for new arrivals. The Hong Kong-French community is represented on the High Council of the Union, which sits in Paris.

In general, the older generation is already well integrated, while the new generation has been specifically prepared for expatriation, and is thus very well able to integrate with the local community.

*Taking into account both commer-*



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# Consumer goods set the pace, but scope for industrial development is considerable

Cognac and Champagne, Dior and Guerlain, Alain Delon and Brigitte Bardot — these are perhaps the predominant ingredients in Hong Kong's image of France. But as any member of the local French community will quickly point out, this image distorts the reality of the French presence here, where French traders, bankers and engineers play a rather more important role than film stars. All however agree on the importance of Cognac.

At present, France is Hong Kong's eleventh largest trading partner, advancing from the sixteenth place in 1974, when Sir Yuet-keung Kan led a top level mission to France. Since then, trade between the two territories has increased considerably, although there is still some way to go before Hong Kong narrows its trade gap, which last year stood at approximately \$1,000 million.

In 1974, Hong Kong's overall trade with France was small (\$658 million) when contrasted with comparable European countries — for example, the United Kingdom: \$4,872 million, West Germany: \$3,737 million, Switzerland: \$1,679 million. Since Sir Yuet-keung's mission, however, total trade with France, in particular imports, has increased by leaps and bounds, to over \$1,700 million last year. To set this in perspective however, during the same period, trade with UK has increased to \$6,993 million, West Germany \$6,713 million and Switzerland \$3,059. This gives some indication of the potential that has still to be developed.

Although Hong Kong has long been aware, if not of France itself, then at least of French goods, it is perhaps only recently that France has become aware of Hong Kong. Except for those taking an active role in Far Eastern trade, Frenchmen grouped Hong Kong together with other developing countries, and little, if anything, was known of it individually. But this is changing. The new relationship is emphasised by Guy Carron de la Carriere,

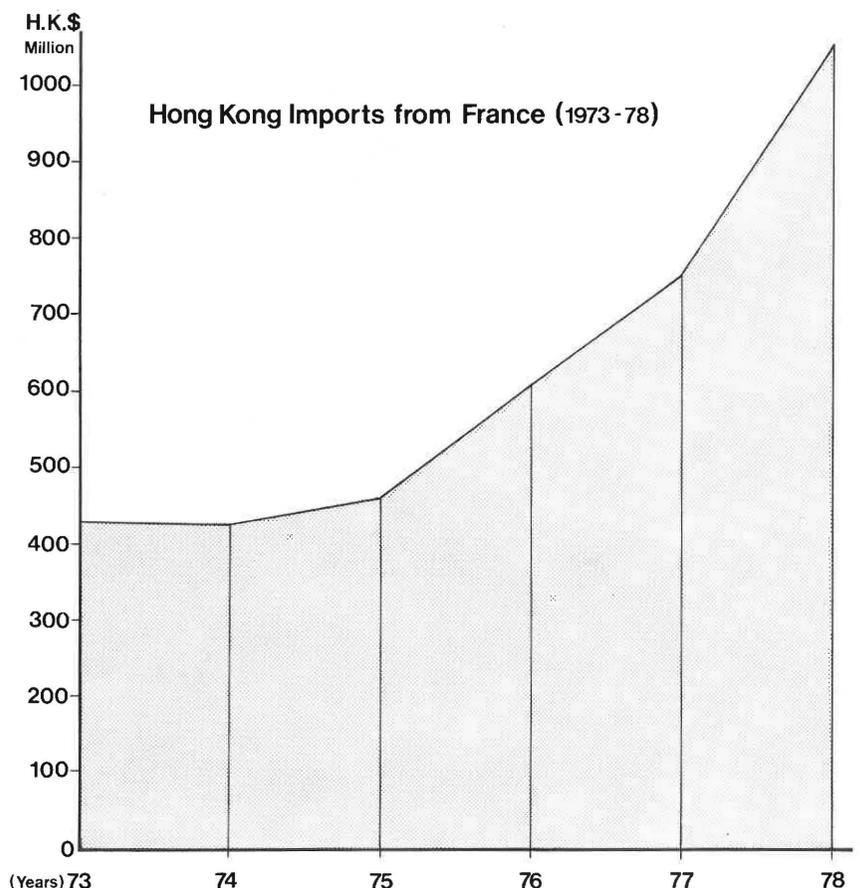
General Manager of CFCE (the French Centre for External Trade) a Government financed organisation which, as a result of Sir Yuet-keung's mission, has recently been working closely with the Paris office of the TDC.

Mr. Carron de la Carriere, who recently led a mission to Hong Kong, comments: 'In the past, the French businessman perhaps thought of Hong Kong as a competitor. But in the past four or five years, the view has changed, and French businessmen now realise Hong Kong can also be a partner. This mission illustrates that. It is organised jointly by us, the CFCE and the TDC. The potentiality of Hong Kong has never been ignored, but the possibilities of working with Hong Kong are now better than ever before. People realise that Hong Kong may be a good industrial partner and that Hong Kong can be a good regional

centre for trading with this part of the world.'

The purpose of his mission is to develop two way trade between France and Hong Kong. The mission consisted of thirty three firms — importers and exporters and, more significantly, manufacturers interested in incorporating Hong Kong goods into their production.

As is the case with Japan, trade between Hong Kong and France has always been in the latter's favour. But unlike Japan, trade with France is largely dominated so far by consumer goods. During 1978, Hong Kong imported from France \$1,052 million worth of products, including beverages, oils and perfume materials, toilet, polishing and cleansing preparations, articles of apparel and clothing accessories. This was 40 per cent more than the previous year. (See chart) ► 23



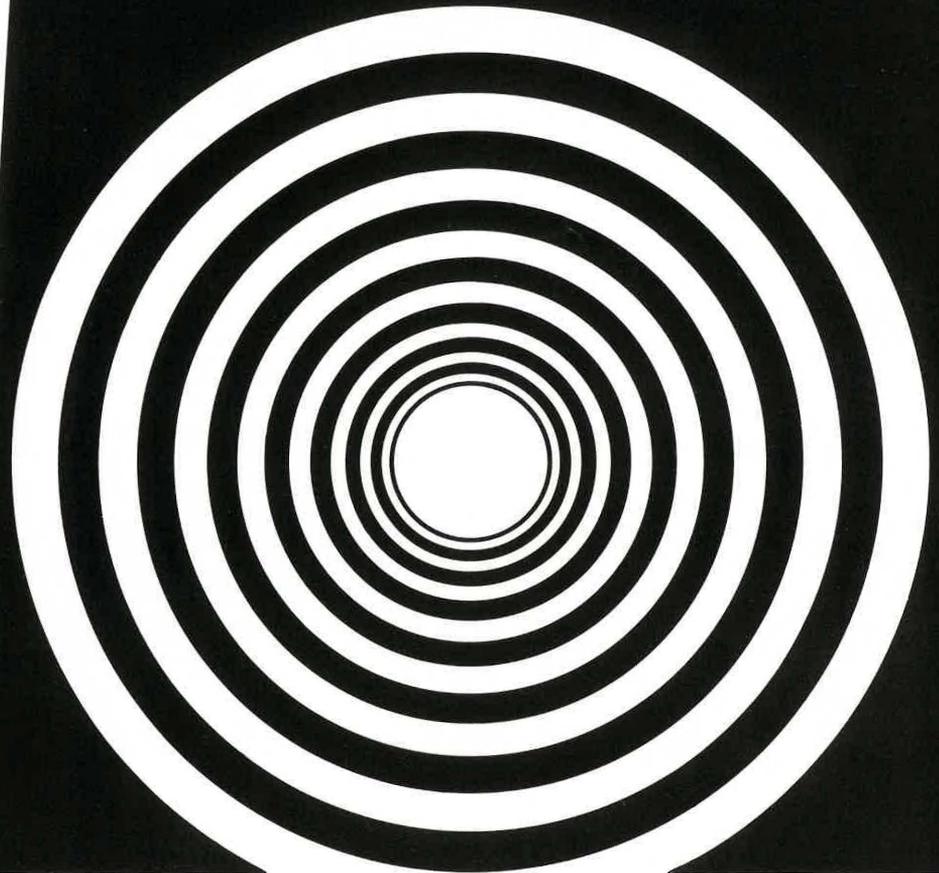


# Contributing to Hong Kong's Growth

An area in which French companies have made a big impact is construction, including many projects which are to-day familiar land marks. French companies have been involved, either solely or in consortia, in the construction of, for instance, (a) Plover Cove Dam; (b) Kwai Chung Container Terminal; and (c) Kai Tak Airport Runway. French construction companies continue to help to build the Hong Kong of to-morrow by participating in work on (d) & (e) the Mass Transit Railway; and (f) the Aberdeen Tunnel.







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The substantial growth in imports is because Hong Kong, being an open market, offers French exporters unlimited scope for expansion. "Over the past five years, we have witnessed a steady growth in France of understanding and appreciation of the possibilities of trade with Hong Kong. French businessmen are more aware than ever of opportunities for closer cooperation that exist here," TDC's Executive Director, Len Dunning says.

And as a result of an improved quality of life, Hong Kong people now spend increasingly on luxury items. High quality garments, handbags and shoes from Paris are no longer restricted to the affluent group. Many in the middle class have become regular customers for these expensive products.

High-fashion boutique owners point out that the desire for good quality goods stemmed from the stock market boom in 1973 when several fortunes were made, and the fortunate speculators began to accustom themselves to a new life style. Following their example, people who had until then followed a pattern of thrift, began to develop the habit of spending money more generously, and the young in particular were eager to learn about fashion, perfumes, and other more expensive symbols of prestige and status.

Consequently, imports of apparel and accessories imported from France rose from \$78 million in 1977 to \$104 million last year. While new comers such as Loewe Courreges began to establish their brands, older brands such as Christian Dior increased expenditure on marketing in order to maintain sales. Marketing new represents 24 per cent of their total expenditure.

Director and Manager of Fardel Co. Ltd., (local agent for Christian Dior), Kenneth Boey, claims that Christian Dior now gets an estimated seven per cent of all expenditure on "luxury" items. It aims to increase sales by 20 to 25 per cent a year. This seems reasonable in view of the growing local demand for high quality products, and the increasing number of tourists (about two million), who last year spent \$2,980 million on shopping, 64 per cent of total tourists' expenditure. Last year, 45 per cent of Christian Dior products were sold to local consumers, 40 per cent to tourists and 15 per cent were re-exports.

Mr. Boey stressed that all Christian Dior products sold in Hong Kong are directly imported from France, and not manufactured locally, as some competitors have alleged. "There are several licensed manufacturers in the Region, but their products are solely for the local markets, and are not exported," Mr. Boey said.

Regarding the problem of spurious products, Mr. Boey told *The Bulletin* that Christian Dior's principals have already taken legal action to clean-up the market. Last year, Christian Dior, through its solicitors, successfully prosecuted 22 cases of product infringement. "We want to ensure that our customers are buying genuine Christian Dior products," Mr. Boey said. "When a product bears a Christian Dior name, it means the customer is guaranteed quality, service and prestige."

Another popular French export is perfume, cosmetics and toiletries. Import of these rose from \$24 million to \$116 million over the past five years. While Lancome and Christian Dior are reaching an increasingly larger market, other brands such as Chanel and Clarins have also gradually built up their names here.

Above all, French wines and liquor top the import list. For many years, Hong Kong has been reckoned to be the third largest consumer of Cognac in the world, and in per-capita terms is far and away no.-one Congac imbibers. There is no need to observe that Cognac has been regarded by the local population as an ideal complement to a Chinese dinner — possibly as essential an ingredient as mahjong at a major reception. Increase in the sales of grape wine is to some extent due to the growing number of young Chinese customers, although perhaps the principal clientele is still expatriate — along with the large restaurants, hotels and shipping lines.

Director of Jas Hennessy (Far East) Ltd. Robert Lidbury told *The Bulletin* that Hennessy's sales has grown in line with market growth over the past few years. In 1978, over 7.2 million bottles of brandy (both duty paid and duty free) were on sale in the market, some 1.2 million bottles above 1977. "The Chinese love drinking good brandy and Cognac. The younger generation accounts for a fairly large percentage of the market, but the older generation also seems to be drinking more," Mr. Lidbury said. "Apart from that, people's tastes have changed, and they have upgraded to buying the better

quality products."

Regarding opportunities in China, Mr. Lidbury says it is premature to expect a large volume of Cognac to be sold, because of the relatively low level of disposal income. Nonetheless, the more developed cities in China could be potential markets and as more Hong Kong Chinese are posted to Shanghai, Peking and Canton, taking with them bottles of Cognac, people in those cities may gradually acquire the habit of drinking brandy. Already Hennessy and other brands are receiving contracts for the supply of liquor at major banquets and functions.

The marketing of wines and spirits, cosmetics and high quality garments depends to a great extent on the efforts of the advertising men. And each year, advertisers spend an alarmingly bigger budget to boost their sales.

Mr. Carron de la Carriere emphasises that French products have won a market in Hong Kong on their own merit. He goes on to point out that this applies not only to the glamorous, well known brand names. "Good French products are not only luxury products. In mass produced products and in capital goods, there are good possibilities that have not yet been exploited in Hong Kong. Our normal share of the market in Hong Kong is very small overall, only 1.6 per cent. We should take advantage of our reputation for quality to promote the sales of other types of product.'

Mr. Carron de la Carriere stresses that French achievement is not limited to trade. He refers to the local achievements of the French construction industry. 'The link with Hong Kong can almost be regarded as historical,' he says. 'I believe the first achievement was the construction of the runway at the airport over 25 years ago. The fact that we have been able to continue to get contracts shows that the quality of our work is good. This continuing relationship is the best sort of business relationship.'

He adds however that even here there is scope for further development, and refers to the possibilities of bringing in new techniques, most notably in the pre-fabrication field.

Imports from France of heavy machinery and equipment have risen from \$28 to \$45 million over the past five years, largely as a result of French contractors involvement in public works projects. In January, Etablisse-



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ments Audemard together with Dragages et Travaux Publics, which has over 20 years undertaken many major projects in Hong Kong, was awarded a \$40 million contract for the development of a quarry in Lamma Island. Additionally, a French company has recently received orders for the supply of escalators for the Mass Transit.

Parallel with the growth in trade and industry, the French are also active in such commercial activities as banking and shipping. At present, three national and four private French banks operate in Hong Kong. Among them, Banque de L'Indochine et de Suez came here a century ago, while Banque Nationale de Paris (BNP) has been active in the region for more than two decades. Several new comers, for example, Societe General, Credit Lyonnais and Paribas have recently obtained full banking licences with the removal of restrictions on the opening of new foreign banks.

Deputy Chief Executive of BNP Paul Henderson told *The Bulletin* that French bankers have established branches in Hong Kong because it has become increasingly important as a trade and financial centre, and as a city to promote trade and industry with China.

Mr. Henderson states that BNP provides a full banking service, and covers every aspect of trade and commerce in Hong Kong. "We are active in both wholesale and retail business. We finance imports, exports, industry, real estates and shipping."

BNP has also maintained an interest in attracting French investment. "We're doing everything possible at the moment to answer enquiries from French industrialists who are interested in this area and in Hong Kong in particular. We have a special representative office which provides information in matters regarding investment opportunities here," Mr. Henderson says.

It was pointed out that interest has been dampened recently because of the rising price of land, and because of tightening of credit facilities. Nevertheless, several garment and electronics manufacturers in France have placed sizable contracts with local manufacturers for the assembly of garments, handbags, shoes and other electronics and electrical goods.

In shipping, Compagnie Maritime des Chargeurs Reunis (the only French

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shipping line in Hong Kong) handles between 15 to 20 vessels a month on regular liner service, or 30 to 40,000 tons of export cargo. It has extended its services to cover now Northern Europe the Mediterranean area, and South and West Africa.

F.X. De Bure, Manager of C.M.C.R. pointed out there has been considerable increase in the volume of trade between France and Hong Kong in items such as vehicles and machinery. Sales of French vehicles — Peugeot, Citroen, Renault, Simca, Chrysler — have risen from \$3 million to \$18 million in the past five years. With the opening up of China, Hong Kong will be handling a greater volume of transshipment cargoes to France, Mr De Bure added.

While French products become increasingly popular in the local market, Hong Kong manufacturers, particularly those in the garment and electronics industries, have tried to secure a stronger foothold in France. One thorny problem that hampers the expansion of local products in France is the heavy quotas imposed by the French Government. In spite of this, Government departments including the DTIC and other organisations such

as the TDC and the Chamber are trying to improve the situation. Paris is on the itinerary of the next Chamber mission to Europe.

Since 1974, the TDC has been working closely with the C.F.C.E. to expand trade between France and Hong Kong, and in 1976 the TDC set up an office in Paris. "I believe it is not too over-optimistic to say that the trend toward eroding protectionist barriers is now well underway," TDC's Executive Director L. Dunning said. "Such concerted efforts have led to considerable success." Noting that exports from Hong Kong to France has risen from \$186 million in 1974 to more than \$575 million last year. Mr. Dunning added, "These positive trade figures reflect, in part, the phasing out of some of the protectionist measures in France which I think we both realise served neither the interest of France nor Hong Kong."

On the part of the French Government, trade policies continue to be revised to ease import restrictions. For social and political reasons, liberalisation however is not an overnight process.

Mr. Carron de la Carriere mentions the current problem. "Unemployment

in France at present affects over one million people, and the unions react sensitively to anything that may affect employment. They have nothing against Hong Kong specifically but if an industry disappears as a result of external competition or what appears as external competition, of course the unions react, even if competition is not the only reason". He adds that this problem is not unique to France but to a greater or lesser degree affects most countries in the developed world.

And for many French businessmen, despite recent advances, ignorance of the Far East persists. The French Minister for Foreign Trade, M. Jean-Francois Deniau recently noted in an interview with the *Far Eastern Economic Review*. "I wish that French companies would use the hub of activities in Southeast Asia — Hong Kong and Singapore — better than they do at the moment, either for sub-contracts or as trade centres with Asia inside Asia."

The French Trade Minister hoped for a build up of industrial co-operation, using French capital and technology. With this, Mr. Deniau says, Asian countries could more easily produce industrial products for distribution in Western nations. AT



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## Chamber News

### Chamber Welcomes 27 New Members

The following companies joined the Chamber during May:

- Addali & Associates, Ltd.
- Bank fuer Gemeinwirtschaft AG  
Representative Office
- Carble Corporation
- Charles Lau & Co. Ltd.
- Chung Lee Garment Factory
- East India Exp. Co. (HK) Ltd.
- Elin Printing Co. Ltd.
- Ferro Far East Ltd.
- Goodenia Limited
- Goodrich Trading Company
- Hong Kong Macao Hydrofoil Co. Ltd.
- Indian Overseas Bank
- L & Y Company
- Ladmiral (Far East) Ltd.
- Lanzco Intimate Fashions Exports
- Larnol Enterprises Ltd.
- Luen Hing Metal Manufactory
- Mabco Limited
- Mass Transit Railway Corporation
- Mok Sun Hing Co. Ltd.
- Patcus Manufacturing Co. Ltd.
- Red Coral Aquarium Ltd.
- Rene Friedlin (Far East) Ltd.
- Rhone-Poulenc Asia Ltd.
- Sure Way Company Limited
- Tomson Industrial Co. Ltd.
- Wahlie Plastics & Garments Fty. Ltd.

### Chamber Plans to Raise \$1 million for Good Citizens

The Chamber, in cooperation with the Royal Hong Kong Police Force and the Secretary for Home Affairs, is planning to raise \$1 million for the Good Citizen Award Scheme. A large scale Fund Raising Campaign will be launched from June 20 for a period of four weeks.



An Appeal Committee, including senior Government officials and leading businessmen has been formed to serve as the major sponsoring body of the Campaign. The Committee is chaired by John Marden and Patrons are the Secretary for Home Affairs, F. K. Li, the Commissioner for Police,

Roy Henry and the Chairman of the Chamber, Nigel Rigg.

Since the establishment of the Scheme in 1973, more than 600 people have received awards ranging in size from a few hundred dollars to \$5,000.

The objective of the Scheme is to give cash awards to people who provide information that leads to the prevention of a crime or the apprehension of a criminal; to those who voluntarily take action to avert a crime; and to those who assist the Police in the apprehension of criminals, possibly at personal risk to themselves.

### Industrial Seminar Considers Japanese Participation in Hong Kong Industry

A group of Japanese industrialists visited Hong Kong earlier this month to assess the potential for joint venture and other operations.

They are members of the Japan Auto Parts Industries Association representing 10 medium-sized industrial companies.

The group attended an industrial seminar jointly organised by the Hong Kong General Chamber of Commerce and the Japan Trade Centre in Hong Kong. The seminar entitled "Transfer



The Director of Japan Trade Centre (Jetro), M. Fukukita addressing some 250 local and foreign businessmen, industrialists and students at a Transfer of Technology seminar jointly organised by the Chamber and Jetro.

of Technology from Japan to Hong Kong" was held on June 6 at the Jade Ballroom of the Furama Hotel.

The Commissioner of Industry and Customs, Bill Dorward was the keynote speaker at the seminar luncheon and other prominent businessmen and industrialists also participated as speakers.

Apart from the seminar, the Japanese industrialists visited factories and toured development areas in the New Territories.

### Seminar for Hong Kong Executives

The Institute of Business Administration in France is organising for the first time a seminar for Hong Kong executives which aims to develop their managerial skills and to acquaint them with the French and European business environment.

Sponsored by the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the French Foundation of Management Education, the seminar will be held in Aix-en-Provence in France between September 2 and 21. Tuition will be paid by these two sponsoring bodies.

Programme Director, Jean Grefeuille said that the seminar will enable Hong Kong businessmen to establish contacts with their counterparts in France, apart from providing them with a good learning opportunity.

For further information, please contact Miss Au of the Hong Kong Management Association at 5-749346/730291.

### Programme on Corporate Finance

The Irish Management Institute is organising an eight-week programme on corporate finance for senior business executives to be held in Ireland between October 22 and December 14.

The Institute, established in 1952, organises each year over two hundred programmes, and has worked on many consulting and training assignments in Africa, Asia, Canada, the Middle East and the United Kingdom.

The forthcoming programme, which cost £3,425 per participant, offers such courses as the Fundamentals of Accounting, Analysis of Stability and Profitability, Cost Accounting and Corporate Funding. Those interested should write to the Registration Office, Irish Management Institute, Sandford Road, Dublin 14, Ireland.

### 12th Hong Kong for New Arrivals course



A



B

The twelfth Hong Kong for New Arrivals course took place on 22nd, 23rd, 24th May. Among those to address the course was urban councillor Mrs Elsie Elliott ( A ). Course participants and their wives also have the opportunity to learn about Chinese cuisine during a meal held in a popular Cantonese restaurant ( B ).



### Buying Mission Visits Korea

A 10-member buying mission led by the Director and General Manager of Dodwell Hong Kong Buying Office Ltd., D.W.B. Christie, visited Korea between May 12 and 19. This was the third time the Chamber organised such a mission to the country.

Orders for the purchase of woollen hosiery yarn, P.U. luggage, P.U. leather, baby and luggage carriers, knitwear and textiles, are currently under negotiation to the value of some \$800,000.

Trade Division Manager of the Chamber, Ernest Leong, reported that response from Korean businessmen was good, and delegates were able to establish many useful contacts.

### African Mission Reports Good Business

The Chamber/TDC mission to Africa has received orders worth more than \$20 million.

The mission visited Kenya, Tanzania, Nigeria between April 28 and May 27. The result of the mission is considered fairly successful in view of import restrictions recently imposed by African governments, Trade Division Manager, W.S. Chan reported.



The Chamber's Trade Division Manager, W.S. Chan (fourth from left) showing samples to Mombasa's Provincial Trade Officer Rem. O. Ogana (third from left) and other senior officials of the Kenya National Chamber of Commerce and Industry

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## 港法貿易 路線需要順風



一九五四年，當本人最初加入港府任行政主任時，工商署已日漸關注法國政府對若干國家（包括香港）入口採偏狹態度的問題。未幾，法國當局即向英政府宣佈對多種港貨入口實施數額限制；及對全部進口港貨施行極嚴厲簽證標準。雖則港府及代表本港的英政府均已盡力去謀求改善，但該等限制仍未有放寬。在本港輸往其他歐洲國家之出口急劇增長之際，本港對法國市場之出口業績實略嫌遜色。

港府經常抗議法國對本港實施的明顯貿易歧視政策，並且指明輸港的法貨全不受任何限制；關稅及貿易總協定亦要求法國應給予香港同等的自由貿易機會（特定或特別措施除外）；承包本港工務合約的法國工程公司亦有良好業績。此外，港府尚提出其他合理的論點來促請法國政府對香港的商務政策作出若干修訂。

說句公道話，法國在早年間確曾遇到相當大的經濟問題，故此一向訴諸保護主義措施，以求保護本國工業。但當法國經濟好轉後，香港所遭受的不合理貿易限制卻依然存在。

轉捩點始於六十年代後期——當時，香港貿易界人士，尤其是貿易發展局下定決心要消除法國對港貨湧入會威脅本國市場的疑慮。在他們不斷努力工作下，港法雙方遂開始建立和保持了各級的官方及私人聯繫。由於法國入口商及其他行商皆有意在港促進商務利益，法國

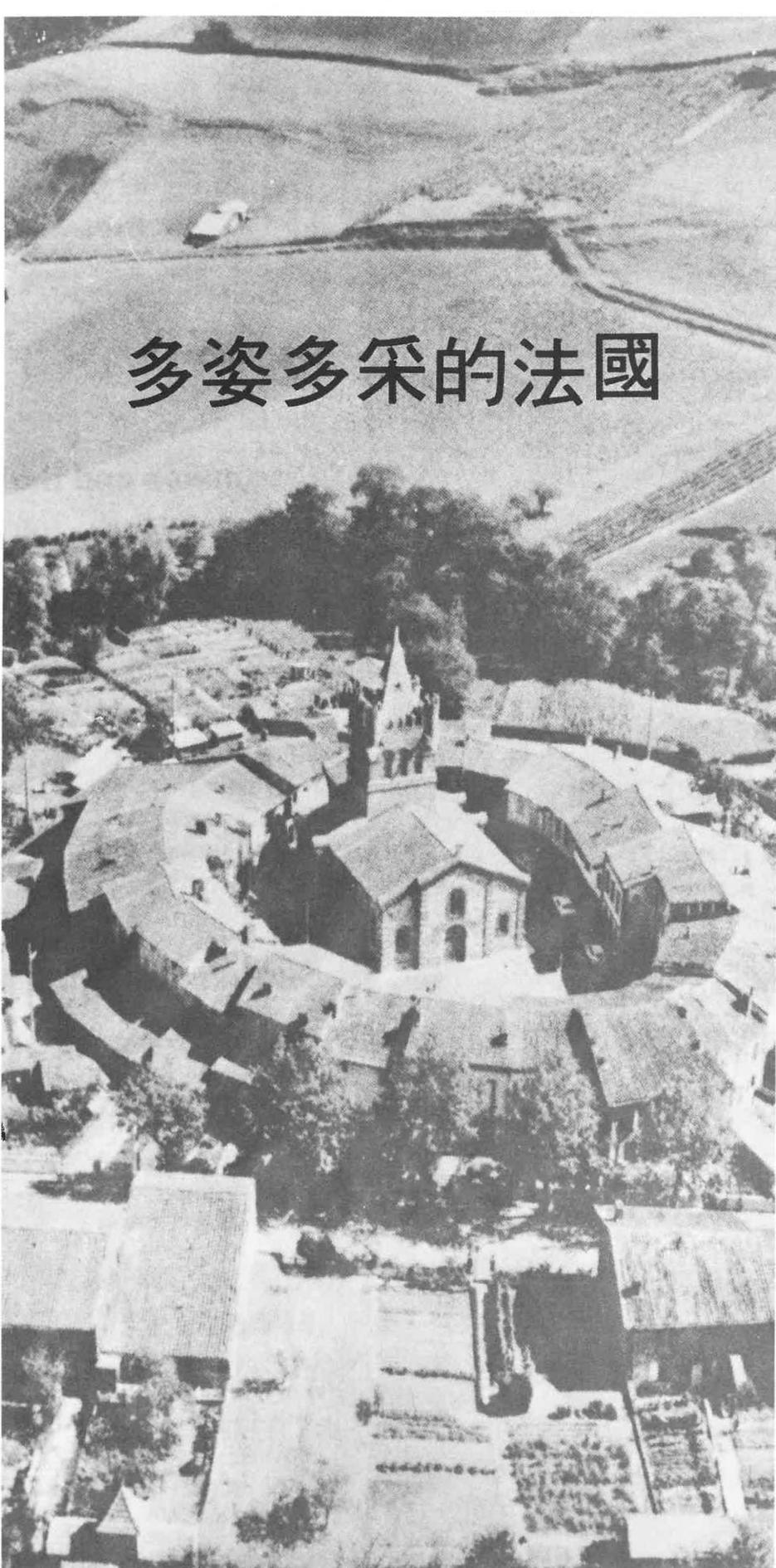
官方遂逐漸增進對香港情況的了解。

期間，香港抗拒了以制抑制和將自由進口制度集於所有其他國家、對法國貨採以選擇性入口管制的誘惑。果真如是，則法國拔蘭地將成為受制的主要目標商品。幸而，港府拒絕對貿易限制措施予以鼓勵。隨着法國改變貿易態度，我們這種政策終於帶來紅利效果。香港貿易發展局與法國駐港領事館及商務公署官員通力合作，促進雙方互解、友好及交換訪問的協作政策。

本期「工商月刊」撰有專文論述這些努力工作的成效。在今日的香港，法國貨品及服務業到處可見；而在港開設的法資公司亦日見增多，（其中很多是本會會員，我希望會有更多法國公司成為會員）。在商店看到的法國商標就是高級、設計優良和別具風格的標誌。法國承建商繼續在港贏得大規模的建築工程合約；而法國拔蘭地在深得飲家讚賞的香港市場中，繼續享譽權威。

香港輸法的出口貨數量正在日漸增加。雖則目前仍存有若干的入口限制，但以往的限制措施大部份經已撤除。香港及法國組織的貿易團經常互相展開訪問；而且，雙方高級官員亦有互相拜訪。整體而言，港法之間的關係相當友好。但願這種關係能持久下去。





## 多姿多采的法國



「真的，中國可謂亞洲之法國；或者反過來說，法國該是歐洲之中國吧？」

此言只是對香港一家上好菜館烹製的佳餚表稱賞的輕鬆讚語，作出上述評語的是一位數年前訪港的法國貿易團團長。然而，由於中法兩國相似程度比烹調方面的共同興趣更為深廣，此言實非純為打趣的說話而已。中法之間的異處無疑遠超其相似點，但倘把這些異處視為當然，那麼要了解兩國存在着的顯著相似點實非難事；尤其當一個人將兩國人民地區性功能與其本洲的相對貢獻聯繫一起時——即中國對亞洲、法國對歐洲而言，情況更容易理解。

以地理位置而言，中法兩國遼遠相對，各據歐亞大陸的一端；中國朝東，法國朝西。中法分別向東西眺望，都可以看到它們的隣國——日本及英國的風貌。這兩國島民的風土人情既不屬於大陸傳統的一部份，但亦非完全與大陸本土相異。

兩國的發展主要依賴以農業為基礎的經濟社會。無疑，兩國的製造工業都正在蒸蒸日上，而事實上，法國製造業佔國民總生產額達百分之四十左右，而農業生產所佔比率則不及百分之十；但法國文化風俗主要是起源於一個以農民為富本的傳統社會。中法兩國都是大國——以本洲的相對地理面積而言——由寒北伸展至氣候緩和的南部，其中居住了各種風情（因地理環境而異）的人民。此外，兩國都可說有地理上的統一，



這是德國、韓國及越南等國家所沒有的——人民雖則基本相同，但它們全都是分裂國，（其中越南則是直至較近年間才告分裂）。政治地理邊界恰好與種族分界相符（正如中法兩國的情形一樣），在人類發展的歷史中的確是件不尋常的事。

中法兩國均建立了助長本洲發展的獨特文化。正如漢語將中華人民聯繫在一起一樣，而法國人在其世界環遊中，亦將法文之地位提高，成為法國文化的獨特標誌。無數的法國文化協會遍設於世界各地；僅在最近法文才失去作為外交語言的卓越地位。

中法都擁有豐富的藝術傳統。兩國

皆以輝煌的中央集權君主制度著稱，此乃在早期發展中帶來國家統一的主要因素。直至革命發生，中法才開始建立了另一種統治形式。兩國均有歷代建都的京城，而且很多傳奇故事都是以這些古城為背景的。

兩國酷似之處可謂數之不盡。一個人可以繼續列舉如下列各點：兩國都有很重要的傳統家庭觀念，兩國民族都傾向內心自我尋求，並且視外國人為夷蠻民族。或者，最基本的共同點是兩國都有古典和莊嚴的文化，這是在國家早期發展中形成的；雖則經過歷代的轉變，依然留存至今。

在整個西方歷史記載中，很多人都

把法國看作第二祖國。英國著名才子及劇作家奧斯卡·懷德曾謂：「當他逝世時，每個美國良民都歸依巴黎。」其中原因是因為法國成為統一突出民族的年代遠較德意等隣國為早。在這方面，中法歷史再度出現酷似之處。中華民族原先聚居黃河流域，及後逐漸向隣近地區擴展，直達天然分界為止。領土擴張部份是透過天然擴充、征服、朝代聯盟和朝代變遷而得來。法國亦是經過同樣的統一合併過程。

在公元前一世紀古羅馬帝國擴張以前，法國或高盧（Gaul 法國古代名稱）歷史大多未詳——（法國煙之所以名為“Gaulloise”，及法國人之所以被稱有高盧人的風情，正是基於這個原因）。法國曾在古羅馬帝國統治下歷經數個世紀，至今古羅馬的風俗和法典遺產依然留存，尤其是在法國東南部普羅旺斯的地區。

現代法國人的祖先不單只是高盧人，而且還有法蘭克人（Franks）——他們是在五世紀古羅馬帝國衰敗時期，由原籍的今日法國東部邊界移居法國北部。

在公元800年聖誕日查理曼獲宣稱為神聖羅馬帝皇時，法國一度似可能成為羅馬帝國的合理承繼人。然而，由於查理曼轄下的領土橫括德意及法國大部份地區；因此，一旦查理曼個人的雄風及軍力消失，這個“違反自然”的領土組合頓告瓦解。

十世紀期間，法國是個由多個封建

州邑湊合而成的國家，（大概與中國漢唐朝代相似）。當時，唯一的共同政治聯繫就是選皇。經過五百年的分裂，這些封建州邑始能復歸統一——其間，被Capet 皇朝統治了三百五十年，又在Valois 皇朝統治下渡過一百五十年。世襲的Capet 皇朝，建都於巴黎。與英國作戰時期，他們逐漸產生了一種民族歸屬感；同時，亦奠定了法軍的雛型。時至十四世紀，只有四大州邑仍保持獨立——即布列塔尼、法蘭德斯、勃艮第及圭恩。後於一四九一年，由於朝代聯盟關係，布列塔尼遂歸法國所有。雖然直至一九一八年，法國東部邊境仍繼續出現政治問題；但由那時起，法國今昔版圖已非常相近，沒有多大變化。

然而，在國家統一中仍存有地區的多樣化特性。正如中國一樣，法國聲名遠播主要就是在於地區的實力。能列舉西班牙、意大利或德國地區名稱的歐洲知識人士不多，（除非他們身為西班牙人，意大利人或德國人，情形又當別論），但他們一般都能列舉富傳奇性的法國地區名稱——如諾曼第、布列塔尼、阿坤廷、羅亞爾河、阿耳沙斯、勃艮第、普羅旺斯、塔斯肯尼等等。每個地區都能使人腦海中浮現一個獨特的景象，即使對未曾遍遊法國的人士來說亦然。

諾曼第地勢起伏不陡，草原如茵，森林繁茂，有宏偉的哥特式教堂建築物，並以乳酪，奶油及蘋果酒等土產馳名。

布列塔尼有塞爾特族的特色，是個帶有神秘古老色彩的半島。

勃艮第是葡萄酒、葡萄園及美食之勝地。烹飪百科全書敘稱：「無疑，勃艮第就是法國美酒佳餚之所在地。」

普羅旺斯就是里維耶拉、陽光燦爛、氣候濕潤而溫和的一個濱城。那裏有古羅馬大道、高架橋及競技場，而且仍為富豪環遊世界所渴望去的避暑遊憩勝地。

這些形象雖已陳腐，但它們仍持有本身的現實基礎。在生產地諾曼第品嚐Camembert（一種鬆軟乾酪）的味道自然更佳，在俯瞰羅亞爾河景色中享受Pouilly Fume 酒比在超級市場酒架上購飲更有情趣。在聖杜栢斯曬日光浴的感受和膚色似乎比任何其他勝地美好。

由是，法國是憑藉着地區性的生命力而成國——這是一個以農場、葡萄園、鄉村、城堡及教堂為中心的生活。不論是羅馬天主教（大多數信奉天主教）、基督教或是反教權主義，法國人一向對宗教都甚為重視。因此，十四世紀教皇遷離羅馬之時，普羅旺斯亞威農市獲

選定為教宗臨時駐地亦非令人驚詫之事。從另一個極端看，法國無神論者對教士的抨擊和謾罵是最為猛烈的。政治方面亦瀰漫着同樣深厚的情緒——戴高樂總統受民族灌輸的深厚愛國精神是非其他政治家所可以比異的。同樣地，法國共黨的成就和團結精神亦非一般西歐國家共黨所能相比的。

倘國內各區是法國生命的軀體，那麼巴黎就是法國生命的精神。相信除羅馬外，歷代歐洲首都或各地城市甚少會建立一個如巴黎那般特出的形象。正如英國人一樣，法國人亦有意識使中心城市成為政府所在地。這自然給予巴黎一種大都會之感——一個發生大事和制訂政策的城市，同時，亦是學術、文藝、娛樂和居住的中心。

蘇邦巴黎大學是歐洲歷史最悠久的大學之一。雖則近數十年來，巴黎的「世界畫都」的稱號已開始受到紐約方面的異議，但「世界時裝中心」的稱號卻從未有人提出過質疑。傳統上而言，巴黎乃年青愛侶和情人之都——「與我往巴黎共渡週末」之邀可以肯定是追尋浪漫的邀請。另一方面，邀某人「往斯德哥爾摩渡週末」則可能是個出席會議的公事邀請。

以人類氣質塑造的巴黎，大概就是其吸引力之所在。不比羅馬（有壓人的氣勢），或紐約（地大令人有難以應付之感），巴黎景色似有使人自然適應之感。塞納河仍是供人漫遊徘徊的勝地，這種漫遊情意是非在泰晤士河或赫德遜河上所可以感受得到的。當然，巴黎的林蔭大道區更被視為城市設計的一個最先和合理的例子。

藝術方面，法國人樹立了他們在建築、繪畫和文學上的高度創作能力。法國在歐洲文學上的成就，相信只有英格蘭（非英國）才可以與它相比較。英法兩國語言的差別至為明顯——英文是一種引喻、含蓄、輕描淡寫和口語化的語言，亦可以說是詩人和戲劇家的語言，不是小說家和哲學家的語言。法文則是一種精練、明確的語言。法文大概是一種控制環境的語言，而英文則是一種探索環境的語言。

兩國在「輸出」語言方面所持的態度亦各有不同。英國人採取「不遷就」態度，大致任由其他種族自己去學習研究他們的語言。法國人則採取一種較系統化的教授方法。在法國殖民統治亞非兩洲的全盛時期，能操純正（大致無方言混雜）法文就是歸屬大都法國的象徵。其理論根據似是：一旦能精通法文，即可以領略其他的法國文化裨益。就東

南亞區而言，這些裨益在越南人中仍甚顯著。

隨着和平藝術——文學與繪畫、烹飪與時裝、語言與哲學的成就——法國人亦對榮譽抱有熱愛。就軍事及文化意義上來說，法國一向是歐洲最強盛的民族之一。拿破侖征服歐洲時間，可說是這種「強國民族」意識的最佳表達。那時，法國的確似有可能成為自羅馬帝國後，第一個實現歐洲統一的國家。

雖然，今日法國人並不被視為一個特別尚武的民族，但法國傳統一向重視維持一支傑出精銳軍隊。這支特別部隊就是法國軍團——獨佔了國人對法國作戰軍隊的最大注意力。因此，很多著名的法國傳奇小說（如三劍客）都歌頌專業劍客的武藝，實在不足為奇。

但上述只是過去事跡的一部份。不論今日法國對歐洲統一抱有什麼野心也會透過共市外交手腕來表達，不會再訴諸軍事侵略。正如世界其他國家一樣，法國亦在急劇轉變中。

快餐，高層商業樓宇和物價高漲是今日巴黎所見的普遍景象。露天餐廳供應的不是當地特式食品，而在遊客餐單上所見的通常只是一般製法的雞、牛扒或牛仔肉食譜。風貌獨特的里維耶拉西部已成為一個地產發展中心區，這與「南法國別墅」的浪漫夢境大不相同。

沒有一國民族能遺忘它的文化傳統。正如美國、瑞典及香港一樣，法國不斷受到世界轉變影響，對這些轉變作出了獨特的法國式反應。單以一門現代化工業來說，Caravelle 無疑就是較早期中式噴射機的最精美典型，而今日商業飛機最富想像發展當然就是Concorde。在發展大型空中巴士業務上，法國飛機製造業一向是獨手與波音及道格拉斯飛機公司挑戰的。

法國名廠時裝仍蜚聲世界時裝界，法國香水則仍然譽冠全球。去年，法國汽車在本港的銷量超過美國車。而在香港，法國干邑拔蘭地更是人所共知的。中式宴會上的佐膳佳釀當然並非德國啤、蘇格蘭威士忌或荷蘭杜松子酒，而是法國的干邑拔蘭地。

法國的成功秘訣大概就是水準的概念。這裏我們又再回到上期刊討論的主題——生活水準。法國人在建立重視水準的獨特生活方式十分成功；他們有幸能在融洽和睦的環境下生活，罕有天災的降臨；他們使環境發展帶來最佳的效果。他們認為人類應有欣賞和享受生活上最美好東西的權利，而無需有自覺或內疚的心理。倘他們願意與我們分享那種生活方式，我們又何以會反對呢！

# 訪問

## 法國駐港 總領事 羅理德先生

□ 本刊記者問  
■ 羅理德先生答



□ 閣下可否略述法國對亞太區國家社會與經濟發展之一般性影响？尤其對香港的影响又如何？

■ 自十七世紀探險家及傳教士東來時開始，法國已有參與亞太區的活動。在非殖民化運動時期，我們只有放棄在越南、寮國及柬埔寨的發展工作；而那時，外國人留駐中國的制度亦告終止。因此，自亞戰爆發，法國在亞太區的活動已大不如前活躍，資產大部份遣回法國或非洲。當時，雖則仍有若干老字號的法國公司繼續留在區內經營，但法國對亞洲之影响大致上應以戰後為主。法國人對遠東及區內其他發展中國家採取新的看法。

參與多邊組織活動是使法國社會、經濟及文化影响得以流傳的一個方法，例如聯合國屬下南太區合作委員會及亞洲經濟與社會發展委員會等便是。就地區性組織而言，則涉及與東協五國之間的合作連繫。

目前，法亞雙邊貿易在法國外貿總值所佔比率已由百分之一點五增至百分之四點五七左右。而港法貿易則佔香港貿易總額達百分之一以上。

或者，我該指出法國並沒有對此等發展中國家採取貿易保護主義措施。本國多年來出現貿易赤字（主要是由能源進口造成），足以說明我們並非貿易保護主義者。

尤以香港來說，法國對香港社會

發展之影响從若干公共建設（如啓德機場、船灣淡水湖堤壩及香港仔隧道）可見一斑。至於教育方面，法國文化協會現已成為世界一大文化機構；選修法文的香港學生逾五千人，其中很多是中國人。

□ 自一九七四年簡悅強爵士率團訪問法國後，港法雙邊貿易已有可觀增長。閣下對來年的貿易展望有何看法，你認為將會有更大的發展嗎？

■ 港法雙方現正在積極擴展雙邊貿易。統計數字顯示：在貿易障礙消除後，港法貿易已有龐大發展。法國外貿部長於一九七六年訪港期間，曾承諾撤消任何一切的貿易歧視。自此，港法貿易即告急劇增長。透過傳播界的推廣宣傳，香港在法之形象日漸改善更有助於促進雙邊貿易。

中國的現代化計劃加強了法國對整個地區的興趣。目前，香港不單是亞商的中途停留站，而且還成為了做生意的目的地。由於香港貿易發展局駐巴黎辦事處經於一九七六年開設，及訪港的法國採購團日增，香港出口商應可展望未來的貿易平衡會漸呈好轉。

□ 雖然法國產品在港甚為暢銷，而法商在本港船務及建築業亦甚有成就，但工業投資方面則未見活躍，這是否基於某些特別因素？

■ 我們並未有把投資主力集中於香港

。部份由於香港政治狀況的關係，法國海外投資一向是集中於區內其他一些國家（如印尼及韓國）。因此，我們並沒有參與香港的紡織業革命，亦沒有在本港塑膠、玩具及電子業的發展扮演一個重要角色。法國在港的工業投資主要是在工務事業方面。

同時，我亦經常向本國的企業家提示：在香港作中短線投資最低限度是相當穩健的。再者，中國政府採取新政策，亦使我對香港的前途更感樂觀。我希望來年間法國將會在港擴展投資事業，以對當局現正謹慎考慮之工業多元化發展有所貢獻。

□ 閣下可否對在港留居的法籍人士作一簡介——譬如說，他們的人數、行業及活動等等？

■ 過去二十年間，居港的法國人數有穩定增長，由五百人增至一千五百多人。他們所操的行業大都與香港人士有關——大部份屬於貿易、工商及銀行界，其他則為教師、學生，當然還有些是領使館官員。

香港法籍人士是一個與香港混和的多樣化團體。他們極能與本地人融洽相處，並且樂意會晤訪港的法國遊





客。來港法國遊客人數平均每年約達四萬名。海外法國人協會是團結本港法國人的一個機構，可在必要時給予具體援助——例如為新來港法籍人士尋找住所等。香港法籍人士亦委有代表，出席巴黎之海外法國人協會高級諮議會。

一般而言，年長一代的法國人已與香港社會融合為一，而年青一代對移居國外更覺容易適應，因此，他們極能與香港人混合。

□ 就商業及文化兩方面來說，法國擬在香港表現一個怎樣的形象？

■ 法國的傳統形象主要集中於烹調及文藝產品的質素方面，我認為這是一個過於簡化的形象。因此，我們擬表現一個現代國家的形象——一個在農工、研究、及科技各方面同樣先進的國家。這從法國歷年來所獲得的諾貝爾獎數目及法國近代發明對世界發展的貢獻可以鑒定。我們現正致力改進

在儀器，工務及科技方面所可以提供的知識。

□ 法國乃歐洲經濟共同體的創辦成員之一。閣下認為如果東南亞國家成立一個類似的經濟共同體，會為本區帶來經濟利益嗎？

■ 法國已對東南亞成立經濟共同體表示支持。當然，歐洲經驗只有部份是與東協組織有關連。雖則歐亞兩地的經濟體驗未必盡同，但仍可表明成員國之間的團結一致及共同興趣。

□ 法國對中美新關係有何看法？

■ 我不想就中美新關係的問題作長論，但這個關係顯然會促進世界和平。本國把中美關係緩和置於極重要地位，因為它對歐洲合作及保安協定至為重要。法國總統最近指出，倘不是全球性的，就不會有真正的緩和。法國是第一個承認中國的國家（於一九六四年承認）——承認這個龐大國的現實和存在。當時，美國對中國仍存有交集的看法。因此，我們已與中國建立了很多的聯繫，而且還體會到今後很多合作的可能性。整體來說，法國是眾多樂意協助中國推行現代化計劃的國家之一。當然，中國所需要的不單只是引進科技，而且還需要研究及管理方面的知識。這些全部都是真正現代化計劃未推行前所必需改善的。

所以，為着解決基本問題，科學、教育、文化及技術各方面都需要合作。但我們並不期望向中國銷售大量消費產品，因為就消費品而言，中國的吸納能力有限。

□ 閣下認為法國在文化上的最大貢獻是什麼？

■ 自法國大革命以來，我們一直在提倡人權及民主方面作出了貢獻。拿破崙制訂的民法典是另一個貢獻；以當時來說，這實為一本相當先進的法典。很多國家在制訂本國法例時，都以該法典的準則作為參考。就科學而言，我們的貢獻主要是在醫藥及核子研究方面。

□ 一向以來，法國女仕都享有富魅力、高雅迷人的美譽，閣下認為這個美譽是正當合理的嗎？

■ 或者，我應該把這個問題反問你。法國女仕當然擁有這些資質，但並不表示女仕們之所以女性化完全只因為滿足男仕的需要。法國最近已實現男女平等，但這並不表示他們完全相同。女仕與男仕平等之際，尚可保持她們女性的魅力和高雅風格。事實上，這是很多婦解運動領袖所犯的一個大錯誤。男女生性就有別，他們是相輔而存的。



## 法國消費品已在本港市場奠立基調，工業投資方面尚有充份的發展機會

千邑拔蘭地與香檳、蒂姆與幽蘭、亞倫狄龍與碧姬巴鐸——大概就是構成法國在港形象的主要成份。但正如任何一個本港法國人都會迅速指出，這個形象歪曲了現實的情況；因為實際上，法國商人、銀行家及工程師在香港所擔任的角色比電影明星更為重要。但一般都同意千邑拔蘭地在香港市場佔有重要地位。

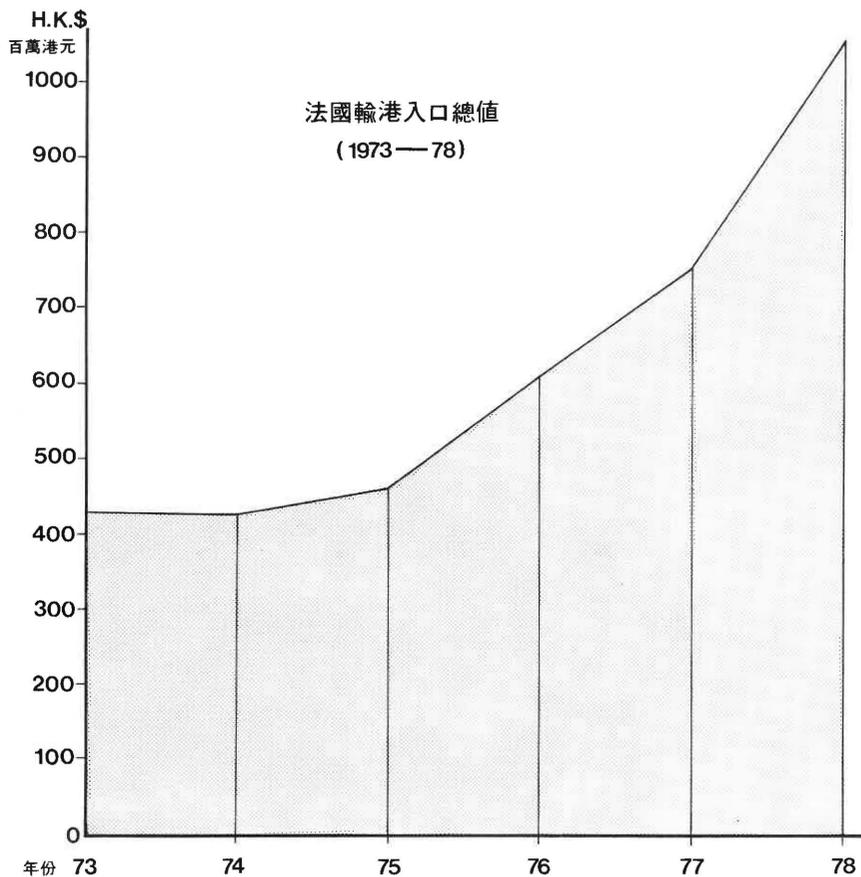
現時，法國已躍升為香港第十一大的貿易夥伴。一九七四年，當簡悅強爵士率領高層代表團訪問法國時，法國在

香港貿易夥伴國中僅佔第十六位。過去五年內，港法貿易雖有可觀增長，不過，香港仍需繼續促進出口，始可縮減貿易差距，（去年貿易差額約達十億港元）。

一九七四年，港法貿易總額為六億五千八百萬元。與其他類似的歐洲國家相比，此數字實屬低微——舉例而言，一九七四年間香港與英國、西德及瑞士之貿易總額分別為四十八億七千二百萬元、三十七億三千七百萬元及十六億七千九百萬元。自簡悅強爵士率團訪問法

國後，港法貿易（尤其是入口貿易）飛速增長，五年內躍升三倍，去年增至十七億餘元。而同期間，香港與英國、西德及瑞士之貿易總額則分別增至六十九億九千三百萬元、六十七億一千三百萬元及三十億五千九百萬元。這些數字顯示港法雙邊貿易尚有發展的潛力。

雖然，長久以來香港已認識法國貨（若非法國本身），但另一方面，法國則大概直至較近年間才開始認識到香港。除那些積極參與遠東貿易的人士外，法國人一向把香港與其他發展中國家並列



，因此對個別國家的認識甚少。幸而，這種情況正在轉變中。法國對外貿易中心（一個政府贊助的機構）總幹事卡倫強調港法貿易的新關係。自簡悅強爵士率團訪法後，近年來該中心與貿易發展局駐巴黎辦事處一直保持密切工作聯繫。

卡倫於上月率團訪港時曾表示：「過去，法商一向把香港視為貿易對手。但近四五年來，這個看法經已轉變；法商認識到香港亦可作為他們的貿易夥伴。這次本人率領代表團訪港就是一個說明，本團是由我們（即法國對外貿易中心）與貿易發展局聯合主辦。香港市場的潛力從未受到忽視，而且，目前與香港拓展雙邊貿易的良機更屬前所未有。各地工商界人士皆認識到香港可能是個良好的工業夥伴；同時，香港亦可以成為亞太區一個優越的地區性貿易中心。」

該團訪問的目的旨在進一步擴充港法兩地的總貿易。該團成員包括三十三家法國商行的代表——其中計有出入口商，和更重要的是有興趣與港商合作生產的法國製造商。

正如港日貿易的狀況一樣，港法貿易平衡顯示法國一向都享有盈餘。但港法貿易以消費品佔大多數則與日本不相同。一九七八年內，香港對法國的入口

貿易總值為十億五千二百萬元；輸入的商品包括飲品、油類及香水製料、梳裝修飾用品及清潔用品、各式時裝及衣着附屬品。此入口數字較七七年增加達百分之四十。

入口大幅增長是因為香港是個公開市場，為法國出口商提供了無限發展出口的機會。貿易發展局執行幹事鄧寧稱：「過去五年間，法國不斷提高對港法貿易機會的了解和評價。法商更尤其注意到現存的加強貿易合作可能性。」

由於生活水準提高，香港人在奢侈品方面的消費正在日益增加。選購巴黎高級時裝、手袋及皮鞋的顧客已不再限於富裕之人；今日，很多中等入息階層人士亦已成為這些高價貨的經常顧客。

高級時裝店東指出：香港人對高質物品的需求增加，乃自一九七三年股市狂升時開始。僥幸的投機暴發戶遂使自己逐漸習慣新的生活方式。一向生活節儉的人士亦隨之開始養成用錢闊卓的習慣，年青一代更尤其渴望認識多些關於時裝、香水及其他象徵榮譽地位的昂貴物品。

因此，法國輸港的時裝及附屬品進口總值已由七七年的七千八百萬元增至去年的一億零四百萬元。一方面，其他新牌子如Loewe Courreges 亦有意

打進香港市場，樹立名聲；另一方面，老牌子如姬仙蒂妮亦見增加促銷開支，以保持市場銷路。目前，推銷在總開支所佔比率約為百分之廿四。

飛達有限公司（姬仙蒂妮本港代理）董事兼總經理梅定輝稱：姬仙蒂妮產品銷量佔奢侈品總開銷估計約達百分之七。該公司打算每年增加銷量百分之二十至廿五。鑒於本港對高級產品的需求提高，及訪港遊客人數日增（約達二百萬名）——去年遊客在購物方面的消費為廿九億八千萬元（佔遊客總消費額百分之六十四），因此，此項促銷目標亦似屬合理。在去年姬仙蒂妮出口總銷量中，約有百分之四十五是售與本港消費者，百分之四十五是售與遊客，其餘百分之十五則為轉口貨。

梅定輝先生強調指出，在香港銷售的姬仙蒂妮產品全部都是由法國直接進口，而非在本港製造，（若干競爭公司曾指責姬仙蒂妮出品為香港貨）。他說：「姬仙蒂妮在東南亞區內只委有幾家認可的製造廠，但它們的產品並非作外銷，而是全部供本地市場內銷之用。」

關於冒牌假貨的問題，梅氏向本刊表示：姬仙蒂妮總公司經已採取法律行動來肅清市場。去年，透過其僱用律師，姬仙蒂妮共成功地檢控了廿二宗冒牌貨案件。梅氏稱：「我們必須確保顧客所購買的是正牌姬仙蒂妮出品。一件產品持有姬仙蒂妮商標，即表示顧客可得到品質、服務和顯赫的保證。」

此外，香水、化粧品及梳粧用具亦為盛行的法國出品。過去五年內，輸港的法國香水、化粧品及梳粧用具總值由二千四百萬元增至一億一千六百萬元。一方面，Lancome 及姬仙蒂妮正在日益擴展市場；另一方面，其他法國牌子如Chanel 及Clarins 亦逐漸在本港市場樹立名聲。

在法國進口商品目錄名列榜首者是酒類。多年來，香港一直被譽為世界第三大法國干邑消費者；而以人口計算，香港更無疑是干邑的第一飲家。無需多言，香港人已把法國干邑視作中式晚宴的佐膳佳釀——就像雀局對盛宴場合一般重要。雖然外籍人士、大酒樓餐廳、酒店及輪船公司仍是法國葡萄酒的主要客戶，但以某程度上來說，葡萄酒銷量增加乃因年青中國飲家日漸增多使然。

軒尼斯（遠東）有限公司董事利伯里先生向本刊表示：近年來，軒尼斯銷量增長一直與市場增長保持一致。一九七八年，市面上銷售的拔蘭地（付稅及免稅者均計算在內）超過七百二十萬樽

# 簡報滙編

## 歡迎新會員

本刊歡迎廿七間公司於五月份加入本會，成為香港總商會會員。(新會員公司名單詳列本期英文版)。

## 好市民獎計劃籌募基金

本會現正與香港皇家警察隊及民政司合作，計劃為好市民獎計劃籌募一百萬元基金。該項籌款運動定於六月二十日展開，為期四週。

籌款委員會乃由馬登担任主席，並由民政司李福述、警務處長韓義理及本會主席雷勵祖聯合贊助，成員包括政府高級官員及工商界知名人士。

自一九七三年好市民獎計劃成立迄今，已有六百多位市民獲頒贈好市民獎，每人獲獎金額則由數百元至五千港元不等。

好市民獎計劃的主旨是要向協助警方的好市民頒予現金獎勵——向警方提

供資料制止罪案發生或將匪徒逮捕、見義勇為阻止罪案發生，或冒個人生命危險協助拘捕匪徒者，均可獲得獎勵。

## 為香港行政人員舉辦研討會

法國商業管理協會將首次為香港行政人員籌辦研討會；其目的旨在發揮他們的管理技能，和使他們熟悉法國及歐洲的工商業環境。

該研討會乃由法國外交部及法國管理學教育基金會聯合贊助，定於九月二日至廿一日在法國普羅旺斯舉行。

籌委會幹事格費爾稱：該研討會除為香港行政人員提供一個良好學習機會外，亦可協助他們與法國工商界人士建立聯繫。

查詢詳情，請與香港管理專業協會區小姐聯絡，電話：5-749346 / 730291。

## 企業策劃課程

愛爾蘭管理協會現計劃為商業界高級行政人員舉辦一項為期八週的企業策劃課程。該課程將於十月廿二日至十二月十四日期間在愛爾蘭舉行。

愛爾蘭管理協會乃於一九五二年成立，每年平均舉辦二百多項課程。此項

課程內容包括會計學基本原理、穩定及利潤性分析、成本會計學及企業資金籌措等。參加費用每人為三千四百二十五鎊。有興趣人士請函詢愛爾蘭管理協會註冊辦事處，地址：Registration Office, Irish Management Institute Sandyford Road, Dublin 14, Ireland.

## 日商在港之工業投資

### 工業研討會探討

一個日本工業團於六月初來港訪問，考察在港從事合作經營及其他工業投資的潛力。

該團乃由日本汽車零件業協會會員組成，包括十間中型工業公司之代表。

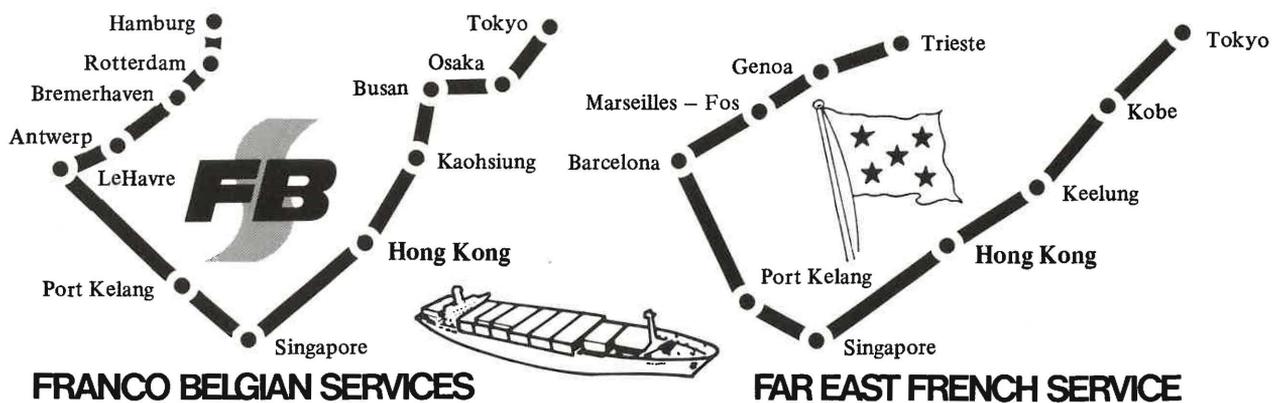
訪港期間，該團出席了一個由香港總商會與日本貿易振興會聯合主辦之工業研討會。以「日港技術轉移」為主題的研討會於六月六日星期三假富麗華酒店翡翠廳舉行，時間由上午九時至下午四時。

工業及海關總監杜華為是日研討午餐會之主要講者，此外，其他本港工商界知名人士亦在席上發表演詞。

除出席研討會外，該日本工業團亦前參觀工廠，及新界發展區。



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