

Oral Questions

meeting. However, Parliament has not been briefed. We have not seen an agenda. Therefore I ask the Prime Minister if he would indicate to the House what he is attempting to accomplish, particularly on the matter of trade. Will he be asking the President for guarantees on the admission of our steel into the U.S. market, as well as our forest products? Will he be reviewing the auto pact as it relates to the ending of American quotas on Japanese car imports? Will he be dealing with these matters at the Quebec city meeting, and what type of arrangement does he hope to achieve with the President on the very vital issue of trade?

Right Hon. Brian Mulroney (Prime Minister): I thank my right hon. friend for his words of welcome, which I appreciate.

During the 10 or 11 hours I will be spending with President Reagan I will be discussing, both in formal meetings and in tête-à-têtes, the points we have on the agenda. Regarding trade, because our discussions and negotiations are still ongoing and hopefully will conclude in Quebec city, we hope to secure a declaration, or arrangement, which would ensure more secure access of Canadian goods, including steel and other products to which the Right Hon. Member referred, as well as the elimination of irritants between us. These include the undertaking to be more forceful in regard to protectionism which has been rising in the American Congress, and to lay the groundwork for a more productive and helpful trade arrangement between Canada and our largest trading partner in the world, namely, the United States of America.

As my right hon. friend knows, there are in excess of three million jobs which depend very heavily on the maintenance and enhancement of an excellent trade relationship with the U.S.A. This is our greatest friend, our best trading partner in the world, and we plan to take steps to improve both the climate and the trading reality.

[Translation]

PRIME MINISTER'S POSITION

Right Hon. John N. Turner (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, I have a supplementary.

This is the reason why I asked the question, because the Prime Minister appeared to be ready to capitulate on the acid rain question. Is he willing to admit that his meeting with the President of the United States will have been a failure if he does not come out with an agreement that will put a stop to acid rain? Are we going to get a deluge of nice words, or will Canada insist on an agreement providing for joint legislation, or on a treaty to clean our mutual air, something solid and concrete for us Canadians?

● (1120)

Right Hon. Brian Mulroney (Prime Minister): As far as acid rain is concerned, we inherited from the Liberal Government a situation on which there has been absolutely nothing done by that Government. Absolutely nothing, strictly zero.

That is what we started with. Since we came into office, we have been working on that, and I think many members of this House have had an opportunity to favourably comment on the initiative taken by the Minister of Environment on a national program—

[English]

Mr. Caccia: You are continuing the Liberal work.

[Translation]

Mr. Mulroney: Oh, the Hon. Minister who could do absolutely nothing! Recently, one could read in the newspaper *Le Droit* that the problem with the Liberal Government was that the former Minister had no influence whatsoever with his colleagues in Cabinet. This is why nothing could be done. Under the circumstances, any progress would be a major accomplishment. But we are going to try and set in motion a process which will force Americans and Canadians to clean out our common environment. That is the responsibility of any Government. We accept the responsibility of taking action here at home, and we will try to better convince the Americans to act both in their national interests and international interests of our two countries.

Mr. Turner (Vancouver Quadra): Mr. Speaker, we shall be waiting for the results, even though the Prime Minister is trying to rewrite the true history of this situation.

[English]

STRATEGIC DEFENCE INITIATIVE—PRIME MINISTER'S MEETING WITH U.S.S.R. LEADER

Right Hon. John N. Turner (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister is reported to have agreed to convey Mr. Gorbachev's concerns about the Strategic Defence Initiative proposed by the United States, to President Reagan this weekend. Did he indicate to the Secretary General in Moscow that the Canadian Government had taken a position endorsing and supporting this Strategic Defence Initiative? If so, did the Secretary General feel that the Prime Minister could act as a broker in this particularly delicate situation? Will the Prime Minister tell the President of the United States that he disagreed with the Soviet Union's position, which is to place that item on the agenda for discussion by the two superpowers?

Right Hon. Brian Mulroney (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, I can tell my right hon. friend, with regard to the position that the Government of Canada has adopted on the research component of SDI, in bilateral discussions with all of our NATO allies the position of Canada was widely applauded and supported by all of those who believe in freedom and democracy.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Mulroney: There was a general view among our allies that to do otherwise would be to diminish the capacity of the