

very nature, often tend to focus greater attention on those far less numerous issues which divide us and on which we have differences. And I suppose this is a normal part of the day-to-day business of bilateral relations in this world of reality. But if that be so, then that is precisely why it is so ultimately important that this visit demonstrate to all so there can be no misreading or misunderstanding, that beneath the complexity of some of the issues and some of them, goodness knows, are complex enough, lies a very firm bond of friendship, proven to be so by history, and based upon constitutional restraint of power and motivated by plain decency and love of freedom.

Given all this, Mr. President, we can surely withstand the differences and, I would suggest, even the occasional ribbing which we know very well goes on, both at the officials' level and among the millions of our respective citizens. I won't try to relate some anecdotes or examples of this ribbing that I refer to. In fact, I don't know if it's wise to relate any of them. But I think I could say as an aside that no one is excluded from this, including some present and former prime ministers and presidents themselves.

Now, as between sisters I'm not so sure. I don't really know. But those of you who have brothers will know very well how imaginative and descriptive some of this language can become in otherwise rather fraternal relations. Maybe it's just as well that I not elaborate further.

Still, I must mention that some Canadians are defensive about our winters, particularly since in very recent years the expression "Canadian snowbirds" became widespread in your country among some of your countrymen. But then our retort could well be to quote from a famous American poet, Walt Whitman. He said, and I quote, "I have often doubted whether there could be a great and sturdy people without the hardy influence of winter in due proportion." I don't know, Mr. President, what your response or sequel to that might be but I don't urge you to come up with it tonight necessarily.

In closing, I should like to say -- and with all the emphasis I can muster -- that a remarkable relationship indeed has been created between our two countries and it has been sustained despite some tangible differences because of human decency and fairplay and by the rational resorting in complex matters and circumstances to procedures and mechanisms that were once and are still today exemplary to the whole world. I have mentioned the IJC. I refer to the scientific and defence research cooperation arrangements, etcetera, etcetera.

Earlier today I tried with words en francais de meme qu'en anglais to express for the Canadian people the kind of welcome that