

Japan and Pacific Rim nations. At the conclusion of our discussion in New York, Mr. Nakasone invited me to make an official visit to Japan following the Economic Summit meeting in Tokyo next spring and I was pleased to accept.

[*Translation*]

Last Thursday I had a private conversation with President Reagan during which we discussed a few questions of common interest.

With respect to preliminary talks on the possibility of concluding an over-all trade agreement between Canada and the United States, I expressed the hope that, in these delicate times when we are getting ready for future negotiations, neither country will let isolated trade tension factors disrupt the climate required for achieving an agreement.

In that respect I pointed out to the President that we were experiencing difficulties in certain sectors such as resinous lumber, pork, potatoes, textiles and fish.

We agreed to do the utmost so as to prevent protectionist pressures in any such sector from jeopardizing negotiations on the kind of over-all agreement we both have in mind.

For his part, the President assured me that he strongly favours a climate of free and open discussions, and that he is adamantly opposed to the various protectionist propositions originating from the Congress.

● (1520)

[*English*]

More specifically, in response to a direct question put by me, Mr. Reagan suggested to me that legislative measures designed to stop the flow of Canadian goods into the U.S. would encounter his vigorous opposition.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Mulroney: The President and I agreed that our next bilateral meeting involving questions essentially of simply Canadian-American interests, although not exclusively, should take place in Washington on March 18. At that meeting we both look forward to receiving the report being prepared by Bill Davis and Drew Lewis, our special envoys on acid rain. In this regard I stressed that the search for a solution to the problem of acid rain should remain at the very top of our agenda for that meeting next March.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Mulroney: Mr. Speaker, many heads of state and heads of Government had come to New York on the occasion of the 40th anniversary of the United Nations. President Reagan took advantage of that rather unique situation and gathering to initiate discussions with the leaders of five of the principal allies of the United States of America, including Canada. The purpose was to exchange views about the forthcoming meeting between the President and General Secretary Gorbachev in Geneva. I had already conveyed some of my views on this

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subject to President Reagan in private correspondence and telephone conversations.

The President was surely right to have taken this initiative. The first meeting between the Soviet and United States leaders at the summit in six years would be a crucial event, whatever the circumstances. But it is all the more so now—it is all the more important. The Soviet Union has an impressive new leader and the United States has an experienced President who enjoys massive public support in his own country. That is so important because of the requirement of an American President to submit whatever is agreed to the Senate for ratification. As we met in New York, the six western leaders recognized that these circumstances represented perhaps a historic opportunity to set relations between the United States and the Soviet Union on a new and constructive course.

Our talks I think, Mr. Speaker, fully justified the unprecedented time devoted to them. In two sessions lasting more than five hours the President was able to present his own ideas at length and to take the views of others. The degree of mutual understanding was impressive. The President knows that he carries with him to Geneva the hopes and expectations not only of his own people, but those of all the western countries. He knows he has their full support. He understands and agrees that progress in arms control and disarmament is central and vital. But equally, he shares the view that, if progress is to be made on the central issue, all other issues that bear upon it will have to be considered, among them human rights, trade and cultural relations and regional issues. The leaders agreed that it would be unreasonable to presume bad faith on the part of the new Soviet leadership. If an honourable agreement is possible at all, we shall seek to conclude one.

In New York we agreed that it would be extremely useful if the President could provide NATO members with a full debriefing immediately following the Geneva summit. As a result, Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to tell the House today that NATO heads of Government will gather in Brussels on Thursday, November 21, to hear President Reagan's impressions of his meeting with Mr. Gorbachev.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

[*Translation*]

Mr. Mulroney: Over the past two weeks, Mr. Speaker, I have had an opportunity to reassert certain major principles of our international policy and, more specifically, to reiterate our strong commitment towards the Commonwealth, the United Nations and the Western Alliance.

I know that at the close of the Nassau meeting none of the other delegations entertained any doubt whatsoever about the seriousness of the measures this Government will take to put a quick end to systematic racial discrimination in South Africa and pave the way for a total ban on apartheid.

Of course, speaking for Canada, we alone cannot achieve that, but we are proud of the fact that the Commonwealth did rise to the momentous challenge confronting it.