

The government which is now in office, and which I represent, was elected with a record majority in Parliament. A lot of things contributed to the size of our landslide, but one of them was a commitment by Brian Mulroney to restoring and refurbishing our relations with the United States. The Prime Minister strongly believes that enhancing the economic relationship with the U.S. is vital to Canada's interests. The public opinion polls, by the way, show the people of Canada agree with him.

So we're moving, and I believe rather quickly, to revitalize our relationship. We're scuppering the National Energy Program, replacing it with measures that will encourage exploration and production again. We're doing away with FIRA, creating in its place Investment Canada, an agency designed to encourage -- indeed, to go looking for -- new investment in Canada.

And then there was last month's Shamrock Summit, between Prime Minister Mulroney and President Reagan, in Quebec City. Without any doubt, the Quebec Summit was one of the most substantive Canada-U.S. meetings ever held. It dealt with a wide range of issues, including acid rain and a new defence agreement, but what is perhaps most important to those of us here, it broke new ground directly relevant to the economic interests of the private sectors in both Canada and the United States.

Let me quote briefly from the joint declaration on trade, which opens with the following sentence: "We embark today on a joint effort to establish a climate of greater predictability and confidence for Canadians and Americans alike to plan, invest, grow and compete more effectively with one another and in the global market."

The trade declaration is of great significance to both our countries. It really has three parts to it. First, an agreement on the immediate resolution of a number of outstanding irritants -- including U.S. marking requirements on steel pipes and Canadian taxes on tourist literature.

Second, the Trade Ministers of both countries were charged with devising a bilateral mechanism to chart ways to reduce or eliminate existing barriers to trade between us. We have been asked to report our recommendations within six months, and in that regard I can report that I have had a very pleasant and encouraging meeting this morning with Clayton Yeutter, who as you know has been nominated to take over the post of U.S. Trade Representative.