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Canada and United States leaders
foster closer ties, 1

CONFRATEL: Toronto to Paris, 2

Canada: a recognized leader in
offshore equipment, 2

Fibre-optics car components, 3

New home for killer whales, 3

Pacific sales soar, 3

Community work for inmates from
Manitoba institution, 4

Shrimp farming in the west, 4

Historic site commemorates anti-
slavery link, 5

Early Canadian lighthouses featured
on stamps, 5

First secret ballot for the blind, 5

Swan River Valley honoured, 5

Chinese academics in Montreal, 6

Derby winner Let's Go Blue
outdistances the field, 6

New Brunswick mayor on top at criers'
championship, 6

More Canadian content, 6

News of the arts — award, exhibition,
contest, 7

News briefs, 8

All-terrain vehicles, 8

Canada and United States leaders foster closer ties

Prime Minister Brian Mulroney and President Ronald Reagan met in Washington on September 25 to discuss the special relationship between Canada and the United States.

In a news conference after the meeting Mr. Mulroney said he was delighted by the progress he and Mr. Reagan had made toward "refurbishing the relationship that must exist between the president of the United States and the prime minister of Canada".

Mr. Reagan praised Canada as a great friend whose experience and advice would be sought in the search for world peace.

More consultation

One result of the two-hour meeting was the decision by the two leaders to hold working meetings together at least once a year, and to have members of the Canadian Cabinet hold meetings periodically with their United States counterparts.

Canada's new finance minister, Michael Wilson, began the practice in a meeting

with United States Secretary of the Treasury Donald Regan. Mr. Wilson was in Washington to attend the annual joint meeting of the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank.

Two days of meetings, beginning on October 15, are scheduled for External Affairs Minister Joe Clark and United States Secretary of State George Shultz, in continuing a quarterly pattern of meetings that began under the former Liberal government.

Mutual interests

On bilateral issues, Mr. Mulroney and Mr. Reagan touched on acid rain, the Foreign Investment Review Agency, the National Energy Program, access to the American market for Canadian exports and strengthening the Canadian economy.

None of the bilateral topics was discussed in detail because they're on the agenda for the meeting between Mr. Shultz and Mr. Clark.

Tribute to space program

After the meeting between Mr. Mulroney and Mr. Reagan, the two leaders commended Canadian astronaut Marc Garneau and two United States companions for their contributions to the space launch on October 5. Mr. Reagan paid tribute to the Canadarm, a Canadian-built robotic arm used on space shuttle flights.

Hailing Canada as the United States' first satellite partner during the early days of the space program, Mr. Reagan said he was proud Canadians were now involved in the shuttle missions and expressed the hope that Canada would contribute to the development of a permanently-manned space station.

Distinct goals

During the ceremony, Mr. Mulroney emphasized his pro-US stand, but also stressed Canada's distinct identity. "A healthy, strong relationship with the United States of America in no way pre-supposes any degree of subservience on our part. I state the Canadian case with vigour, with independence



Canapress

Prime Minister Brian Mulroney (left) and President Ronald Reagan after their meeting in the United States' capital, Washington, on September 25.



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