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WILLIAM J. CLINTON

XLII President of the United States: 1993-2001

The President's News Conference With Prime Minister Kim Campbell of Canada in Tokyo

July 9, 1993

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The President. Good afternoon. I have just spent a very rewarding hour and a half with Prime Minister Campbell and members of her government. After a very impressive career in other posts in government and a very rapid rise to the leadership of her country, I must say I have been very impressed with the contributions that she has made to this summit and with the conversations that we have had all along, but especially today.

The relationship that we have with Canada is really unique in all the world. It is our largest trading relationship. We are each other's largest trading partners. And even though we have disputes from time to time, when you consider the volume and diversity of trade between us, those disputes are remarkably few and narrow in scope.

Canada has been a very strong security partner of the United States. And while we share a lot in common, we also are very different and distinctive countries, and I think we have a lot to learn from one another.

I might just mention with regard to two specific issues that we discussed, first, I reaffirmed to the Prime Minister my commitment to successfully concluding the side agreements to the North American Free Trade Agreement and to then moving forward to successful passage of that agreement in the United States Congress. As you know, it has passed the Canadian Parliament pending its ratification by Congress. And secondly, I asked the Prime Minister for her support in our attempts to fulfill the agreement signed just a few days ago by President Aristide and General Cedras to restore democracy in Haiti. Canada has been one of the United States' best friends on the Haitian issue, with a substantial Haitian population and a lot of French-speaking people who can make a unique contribution to this restoration process. So for both those things, I am grateful for our common positions, and I appreciate her support.

I think I'll turn the microphone over to Prime Minister Campbell now, and then we'll be glad to answer some questions.

Prime Minister Campbell. Thank you very much, Mr. President.

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I think I'll turn the microphone over to Prime Minister Campbell now, and then we'll be glad to answer some questions.

Prime Minister Campbell. Thank you very much, Mr. President.

I'd simply like to reiterate that we had a very fruitful discussion, and I think as two novices in the summit process, we both enjoyed participating very much. I'd like to thank the President for responding very quickly to a request that we have made, and that is that he designate someone in the White House to be a point of contact for us in managing a variety of issues that arise between our two countries, and particularly some trade dispute issues. And the President has agreed to do that, and we're looking forward to having that person designated.

I also want to take this opportunity to congratulate the President and his Government on the resolution of the situation in Haiti. I think without the United States' involvement, we would not have that kind of happy resolution. And I confirm Canada's willingness and commitment to be supportive to the follow-up process in Haiti.

Economic Summit and Japan-U.S.. Trade

Q. Mr. President, how important is it for you and Prime Minister Miyazawa to wrap up this summit with a bilateral U.S.-Japanese trade agreement? Will the summit be detracted if you fail to achieve this agreement, given the fact that when you met in April, both of you indicated that you would achieve this agreement by now?

The President. No, it will not, because I think everybody concedes that the summit has far exceeded expectations for it before we began, for two reasons: first of all, the market access agreement on manufactured goods, which is the biggest tariff reduction agreement among nations in 7 years the jobs, the implications of that are staggering if we can, in fact, conclude the trade agreement by the end of the year; and secondly, because of the size and scope of the aid package to Russia which is very much, as I have said repeatedly, in the interest of the United States and every other democracy in the world—continuing to denuclearize Russia, continuing to develop a free market economy that can interact with the rest of us. So this has been an extremely successful summit.

We should be driven in our negotiations with Japan by one simple question: Is this a good agreement or not? Will it advance our common interests in reducing the imbalances in our relationship? And if the answer is yes, we should go forward; and if it's not, we shouldn't. And that's what we're going to do. I don't think it has anything to do with the way the summit comes out. It's been a huge net plus.

Q. Mr. President, there seems to be a new optimism today about seeing such an agreement, and are you willing to compromise on the numerical targets or the basic issues enough to bring about an agreement?

The President. Well, I hope there will be an agreement, and I hope I can answer yes to the question that I just posed. I don't think I should say much more about it now. They're talking—



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Q. But there is a new optimism?

The President. I don't want to characterize it. I think anything I say to characterize it, up or down, may be wrong. We just have to wait and see what happens.

Q. Mr. President, the economic declaration that you just approved today said that in the future the summits should be more informal, and they should have fewer documents and declarations. And given that this one was a lot less specific in terms of the commitments to growth and stimulus than you had originally wanted, have you given any thought to doing away with this declaration in the future? Did this have any purpose at all?

The President. No, I like this political declaration. Actually, I think both the declarations that we issued here are briefer than they have been in the past, and they're quite specific and, I think, quite good. But we tied very hard not to make them unrealistic, that is, not to have the nations commit to things they had no intention of doing or, perhaps more to the point, no capacity to do.

So I feel pretty good about that. I think what the people who've been here for many years said was that they liked the fact that we were moving back toward a more informal summit process where we focused on one or two big issues, where we tried to get one or two things done, and we didn't overly bureaucratize it. And I think our commitment was to go to Italy next year with smaller operations, more streamlined, even less bureaucracy but focusing on intense, very honest and open interchanges among the leaders, and then try to get one or two specific things done.

Anyone from the Canadian press?

Canada-U.S.. Trade and Strike on Iraq

Q. For your benefit, Mr. President, I'll put my question in English. I would like to know, Mrs. Campbell, in what terms you did talk to the President about trade disputes between Canada and the United States. And I'd like to know as well if you asked him that the next time the United States launches an attack somewhere, if Canada would like to be informed before the event instead of after?

Prime Minister Campbell. Well, in answer to your second question, the answer is yes.

In answer to the first question, I raised a number of the issues that are outstanding between us. Now, obviously we weren't in a position to resolve them here. A number of my provincial colleagues also raised concerns, and so I discussed the irritants that are between us, particularly wheat, sugar, softwood lumber. And I'm very pleased that we will be pursuing those, but more importantly, that we now will have someone in the White House who will be designated as someone that we can be in touch with to help manage those particular irritants between us.

The President. Let me answer—if I might answer that question. The Prime Minister mentioned wheat, sugar, lumber, and beer. We talked about those issues. She also brought to my attention, frankly, something that I have to admit I think she's absolutely fight on, that Canada should have been notified at the time we took the action in Iraq. Let me tell you, there was a very tight time window there because of the coincidence of the time when I received the final report from my intelligence and investigative agencies and when the trial started again and getting past the Sabbath in the Islamic countries, the day of worship. That's something that we should have done then and that we will do in the future. Canada has been a good strategic ally of the United States. It's absolutely pivotal in any number of ways. And it was a very legitimate issue to raise.

Another question from the Canadian press?

Trade With Japan

Q. Prime Minister, President Clinton has been pressed from the Japanese to reduce their trade deficit. Are you not afraid that such pressure might result in Japanese investment in Canada being reduced and siphoned off to the United States?

Prime Minister Campbell. Well, there is already a competitive environment for investment. I think the challenge for us is to be an attractive investment environment. And right now there are no guarantees. So I don't see that that's necessarily going to result in the future. I think what the Americans are most concerned about is not simply the flow of investment from Japan to North America but the opening of the Japanese market to goods that are made in North America. And I think that's the significant part of that, of the concern that the United States has raised with Japan. So the short answer to your question is no, I don't see that as a problem in either the short or medium term.

The President. If anything, it might increase Japanese investment in both the United States and Canada so that market share could be maintained while abating the trade deficit. So I wouldn't worry about that at all. I think if anything happens on the investment side, it will encourage more investment in our continent.

Q. Prime Minister, do you support numerical trade targets with Japan the way the United States is seeking at the moment?

Prime Minister Campbell. Well, I think it's up to the United States and Japan to find the mechanism that will work best to meet their goals. I made the point both to the President and to the Prime Minister of Japan that it is in Canada's interest that they resolve those problems because when the United States and Japan have a trade dispute, it is very often Canada that gets sideswiped by the remedies.

So it is very much in Canada's strategic interests that those issues be resolved. As to which mechanism is used, I think that's up to the United States and Japan to determine. But we very much support the resolution of that dispute.

The President. Thank you all very much.

NOTE: The President's 21st news conference began at 2:23 p.m. at the U.S. Ambassador's residence. In his remarks, he referred to Gen. Raoul Cedras, commander of the Haitian military.

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