



Special Interview

PM CHRÉTIEN: COMMITTED TO UKRAINE

Canada's Prime Minister Jean Chrétien recently provided Monitor staff with his government's position and direction on some key issues dealing with Ukraine. We share some of his replies with our readers.

Q. From June 15 to 17, 1995 Canada hosts the 21st G-7 Economic Summit in Halifax. The Summit covers global issues including nuclear safety and proliferation, assistance to developing countries and to economies in transition, international trade and protecting the environment. A plan for closure of the Chornobyl nuclear power plant and Ukraine's economic transformation are also on the table. As Halifax Summit Chair, what steps is Canada taking to support Ukraine's agenda?

I met President Kuchma in Moscow during the end-of-World War II ceremonies [in May] and indicated that, at the Halifax Summit, I will continue to urge my G-7 partners to maintain their support for Ukraine and its reform efforts.

Canada welcomes Ukraine's progress on economic reform since the Naples Summit, and looks forward to

further development of our important economic and political relationship.

I have welcomed President Kuchma's commitment to close Chornobyl by 2000. Canada is the chair of the G-7 Nuclear Safety Working Group, and I know that Ukraine's interests on Chornobyl are being clearly presented in discussions between G-7 and Ukraine representatives in the run-up to the Halifax Summit. We fully expect that the Halifax Summit will express strong support for Chornobyl clean-up.

Q. At the Naples G-7 Economic Summit last July, Canada succeeded in having Ukraine's problems highlighted and, in October, representatives of the G-7 nations and leading world financial institutions came to Winnipeg to discuss Ukraine's plan for economic transformation and international support to help reform and strengthen Ukraine's economy.

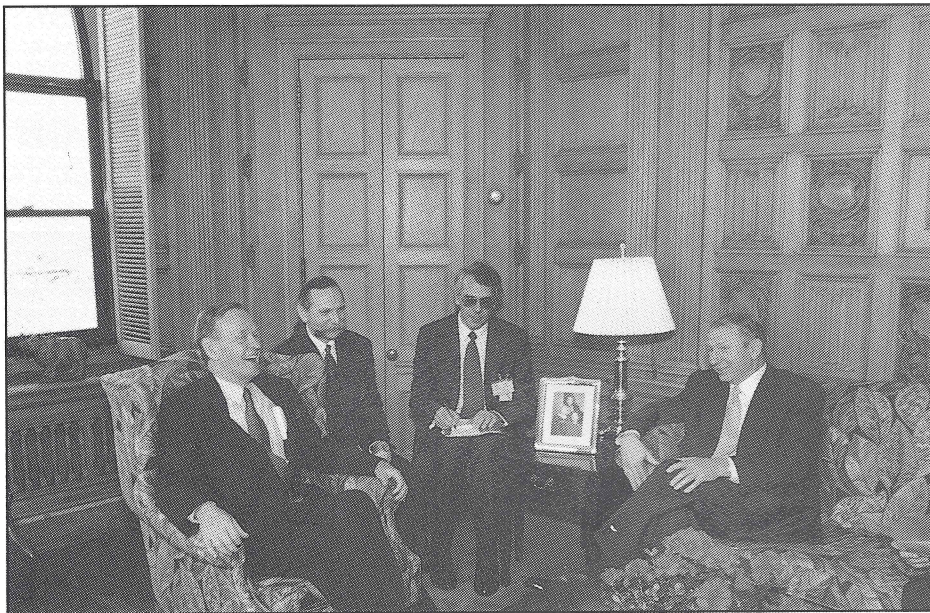
Are there plans for Canada to offer at the Halifax Summit the organization of a subsequent session of the Winnipeg conference?

Canada was honoured to host the Winnipeg Conference on Ukraine's Economic Reform last year. I was very pleased that we were able to achieve an important agreement among G-7 countries and international institutions on Ukraine's economic program. We are confident about Ukraine's implementation of the IMF program, and will be discussing at Halifax what would be the most effective approach for the continued international support of economic reforms in Ukraine.

Q. Canada has committed substantial critical support to Ukraine through its technical and humanitarian assistance programs, multilateral and regional initiatives, balance of payment support and commercial credits. Canada is also strengthening Ukrainian institutions and organizations in the public and private sectors. Are there plans to support Ukraine's move towards democratic development and transition to a market-based economy?

Canada has committed \$163 million in technical assistance to support Ukraine's reform efforts. We are discussing with Ukrainian partners how to focus on nuclear safety and conventional energy sources. We will also be looking to develop greater trade links and ties between our private sectors, including the area of training.

Q. In accordance with the intention expressed by the representatives of the 14 western states last year (Canada included in that number) to assist Ukraine in the event of her signing the NPT, is it foreseen that Canada will take an active role in Ukraine's denuclearization?



J.M. Carisse (PMO)

Prime Minister Chrétien enjoys a relaxing moment with President Kuchma during last year's state visit.